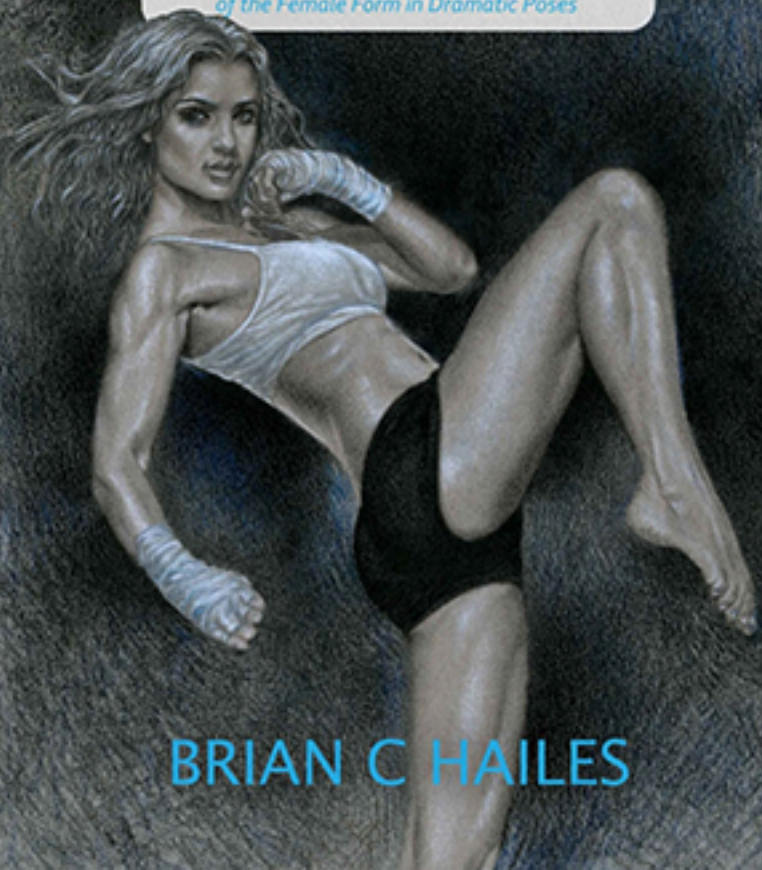# DRAW IT WITH ME: THE
DYNAMIC
FEMALE FIGURE

*Anatomical, Gestural, Comic & Fine Art Studies
of the Female Form in Dramatic Poses*

BRIAN C HAILES

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BRIAN C HAILES

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

ARTIST'S NOTE

When I decided to undertake the monumental task of creating a fully-illustrated 'how to draw' book focused on the dynamic female figure, I did so not because I am a master artist who wants to divulge my genius, expertise, and knowledge of human anatomy, composition and expression to the masses, but because I am still a student myself, and I wanted to continue the learning process and improve my own skills in rendering the human form. This project simply gave me added incentive and an extra nudge to move forward and do it.

I am also still on that path all artists must take to find their signature style. Having worked for the past fifteen plus years as a full-time designer and illustrator, I have had the pleasure and challenge of rendering hundreds of projects from book covers, comics, brochures, and ad campaigns in dozens of different styles (and industries) suited to the job at hand, and in so doing, I haven't quite settled on my one true 'look'—if there is such a thing. At least, not yet.

A lot of these daily exercises (that you'll see in the forthcoming pages) have also loosened me up a bit, forcing me to let go of the detail and tight rendering style I seem to have settled into for the last decade or so—(apparently, Chris Van Allsburg's childrens books made a considerable impact on me in my youth).

The contents of this book are not meant to be academic. There is no curriculum. It is not a complete guide to drawing the figure, and it is not all-inclusive; it is not a be-all and end-all tutorial collection on drawing the human female figure. To the contrary, this selection of traditionally and digitally hand-drawn examples and step-by-step process illustrations are more a part of my own personal journey, analyzing and practicing differing approaches that I have come to find work for many other artists.

I studied illustration and graphic design under the tutelage of the late master illustrator and gallery painter, Glen edwards, as well as the late illustrator/designer Alan Hashimoto, earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Utah State University. I also attended classes in illustration, design, and film-making at The Academy of Art University in San Francisco before graduating from USU in 2004.

I believe a formal education can contribute considerably to the proficiency and knowledge of any given aspiring artist, but I also feel strongly that most of my growth as an artist occured in my home studio, drawing away and into the wee hours of the night. I feel, above all else, that observation and practice are truly what make the artist. So if you're serious about wanting to improve your own skills, and don't want to leave it to chance or God-given talent (which is basically the same thing), draw, draw, and draw some more. If you want to be a filmmaker, you have to make films. If you want to be a dancer, you need to dance. And if you want to be an artist, you must create art. There are really no shortcuts, especially in today's world, where criticism thrives and competition proves fierce.

When I was in art school, there seemed to be a great divide between the disciplines of fine art and commercial art. In fact, there was a distinct line drawn between the two. I remember one of my painting professors telling me "that's too bad" when he found out I was majoring in illustration, which was being taught as a commercial trade. And as soon as Edwards retired (during my junior year at USU), rather than hire his replacement, the Art Department shut down the illustration program altogether, sending the last of us illustration majors to finish up in graphic design with Hashimoto. I think some of the negative opinions

surrounding the illustration department came from the assumption that we were mere 'ghost writers', making art out of someone else's style and vision. And on top of that, we weren't 'classically trained' in the same vein of the rigorous and formal New York, Paris or Florence art academies. However, we were asked to do much more than illustrate; we were pushed to master anatomy and the seven elements of art: color, line, shape, form, value, texture and space, and how those elements are arranged within the principles of design (contrast, rhythm, proportion, balance, unity, emphasis, movement, and variety) as they relate to the applicable mediums used. We were also to generate the concept, conventions, and style for every project, playing the parts of both art director and artist. This training helped me develop skills that I now use when I design or produce public as well as personal fine art projects.

The truth is, no matter who you are or where you received your tutelage, you will need to forge your own artistic path. Whether self-taught or classically trained, there will be obstacles, there will be road-blocks, there will be distractions, and there will be naysayers (particularly that oh-so-familiar voice inside your own head). But if you want to be an artist, you've got to buckle down and start creating your best work despite all that. No one can show you exactly the type of artist you will or should be. You've got to discover that for yourself. And I hope you will. Because no one can show you how to be creative. You simply must learn how to allow yourself to be creative. And the best way is by waking up in the morning and doing. May I wish you the very best of luck as you begin or continue that lifelong journey!

—B.C. Hailes

BRIAN C HAILES

TECHNIQUE(S)

First of all, there is no right or wrong way to draw. Only your way. And as drawing is the basis from which we start all artworks, you need to understand that it's not only possible to improve your drawing skills over time with consistent practice, but inevitable; particularly when the practice is focused in the right direction, and in earnest.

One of the great things about drawing is that only a simple pencil and paper are required to get started. *What type of pencil?* You might ask. *What brand of paper?* We'll cover that in the next section. For now, let it suffice to say that whatever your medium of choice, be open to trying your hand at many and new media, and new possibilities. New tools and supports might just open up a brand new realm of opportunity in terms of line quality, tonal shading, emphasis and the final look of your artwork.

It is also important at the beginning to consider the intention or aim of your drawing. Do you intend to render your subject in a realistic or life-like manner? Or skew your representation to communicate something other than a visual memory or 'snapshot', something abstract or expressive?

What we're talking about here is your *technique*.

Technique, I believe, has only a little to do with your instrument(s) of choice (i.e. pencil, pen, stylus, brush, paper, etc.), a little to do with your reference material, a little to do with your hand, and A LOT to do with your eye, and by 'eye' I mean your brain. Personal technique (or interpretation) might best be described as how one utilizes the basic elements of art in their work—composition, line, expression, tone, texture, color, etc. Also, exploring different avenues and subjects can impact one's technique, be it from life, models, photographs or the imagination.

A figure drawing of the human form in any of its various shapes, angles and postures can be difficult to produce, depending on your style, experience and level of individual perfectionism. But then, producing anything of merit in any industry can be a challenge, so why let that stop you? When drawing the figure, your degree of representation may range from highly detailed, anatomically correct renderings to loose, expressive sketches, so don't get bogged down thinking there's only one correct or 'popular' approach. The truth is—to use a cliché—there's more than one way to skin a cat. Why you would want to skin a cat, I've no idea, but if you did, there are apparently many ways to do it. So it is with drawing and painting.

Many artists (including myself) prefer to use live models whenever possible ("life drawing"). Others prefer to work from their imaginations or from photographs or videos, or all of the above. (I'm an "all of the above" kind of guy). Each approach has its benfits and drawbacks (no pun intended).

A figure drawing may be a composed work of art or a figure study done in preparation for a more finished work such as a painting, and is arguably the most difficult subject an artist commonly encounters. In fact, entire courses are dedicated to the subject. The human figure is one of the most enduring themes in the visual arts, and it can be the basis of portraiture, illustration, sculpture, animation, medical design, and many other fields.

As already mentioned, artists take a variety of approaches to drawing the human figure. They may draw from live models or from photographs, from skeletal models, or from memory and imagination. Most instruction focuses on the use of models in "life drawing" courses. The use of photographic reference—although common since the development

of photography—is often criticized or discouraged for its tendency to produce "flat" images that fail to capture the dynamic aspects of the subject. Drawing from imagination is often lauded for the expressiveness it encourages, and criticized for the inaccuracies introduced by the artist's lack of knowledge or limited memory in visualizing the human figure; the experience of the artist with other methods has a major influence on the effectiveness of this approach.

However, the key is to not get bogged down, stressing over what you "should" or "shouldn't" be doing or what other successful or experienced artists are currently producing, because much of the time, this can discourage up-and-coming creators, ultimately leading them to quit trying altogether. Learn the rules, but don't obsess over them. Get inspired by other artists, but don't compare your work to theirs (in terms of quality). These are difficult lines to draw sometimes, as we live in a very competitive world. Just remember that all art is subjective, and what looks like garbage to one person might be spiritually transporting to another. What one might deem a "worthless" abstraction might actually be valued in the tens of millions at gallery auction.

So in short, create. And don't stop creating, using whatever technique(s) you like. Until you start working for a company or clients that expects a certain style. But let's not talk about that right now.

Instead, let's list some different techniques or approaches you might like to try as you "Draw It With Me" in the upcoming pages:

Automatic drawing - Developed by the surrealists, as a means of expressing the subconscious. In automatic drawing, the hand is allowed to move "randomly" across the paper.

Blind contour drawing - A drawing exercise where an artist draws the contour of a subject without looking at the paper.

Contour drawing - An artistic technique in which the artist sketches the style of a subject by drawing lines that result in what is essentially an outline; the French word contour meaning, "outline".

Chiaroscuro - Using strong contrasts between light and dark to achieve a sense of volume in modeling three-dimensional objects such as the human body.

Gesture Drawing - A laying in of the action, form, and pose of a model/figure. Typical situations involve an artist drawing a series of poses taken by a model in a short amount of time, often as little as 10 seconds, or as long as 5 minutes.

Grisaille A painting executed entirely in shades of grey or of another neutral greyish colour. It is particularly used in large decorative schemes in imitation of sculpture.

Hatching - An artistic technique used to create tonal or shading effects by drawing closely spaced parallel lines.

Cross-Hatching - An extension of hatching, which uses fine parallel lines drawn closely together to create the illusion of shade or texture in a drawing. Crosshatching is the drawing of two layers of hatching at right-angles to create a mesh-like pattern.

Mass drawing - Refers to rendering the solidity of the subject by masses of tone or color, without emphasizing lines or edges. Also called weight and modeled drawings, they are one of the basic exercises in figure drawing along with contour drawing and gesture drawing.

Screentone - A technique for applying textures and shades to drawings, used as an alternative to hatching. In the conventional process, patterns are transferred to paper from preprinted sheets, but the technique is also simulated in computer graphics.

Scribble - A drawing that is rushed, done quickly or carelessly, often resulting in a "messy" organic quality.

Stippling - The use of tiny dots that become closer to create darker values, and gradually further away to create lighter values.

Trois crayons - A drawing technique using three colors of chalk: red, black, and white. The paper used may be a mid-tone such as grey, blue, or tan.

Drybrush - A painting technique in which a paint brush that is relatively dry, but still holds paint, is used. Load is applied to a dry support such as paper or primed canvas. The resulting brush strokes have a characteristic scratchy look that lacks the smooth appearance that washes or blended paint commonly have.

16

EQUIPMENT

Pencil, Charcoal, Pen & Ink, Colored Pencil, Pastels, Paint, Bristol Board, Charcoal Paper, Toned Paper, Pastel Paper, Watercolor Paper, Illustration Paper . . . the list goes on.

So, what should you be using to create your masterpieces? In truth, I've always held to the belief that amazing artwork has everything to do with the skill of the artist, and very little to do with the tools said artist uses. There can, however, be a small improvement when the master goes from using crude, cheap or outdated tools to sophisticated new ones.

Choosing a medium can be difficult, especially for beginners, but when it comes to art, experimentation is the order of the day. There exists a wealth of available media, equipment and software at your fingertips, which may cause one to feel uncertain about where to start. Experimenting can, in fact, be seen as an opportunity to advance your work. After all, no one ever really made a difference nestled snuggly inside their comfort zone. Maybe join an art group, borrow from a friend or try out different media before investing in expensive materials yourself. Look at other artists' work and figure out what you're drawn to. What inspires you? What are they working with?

Also, there are no rules that say you must stick to one medium for a given piece of artwork—combining different media types can yield unforeseen and exciting results. My favorites happen to be pencil, colored pencil and charcoal.

For drawing, the pencil is the first and most useful choice, and it's good to have a range of grades, say from 2H to a softer 10B. The harder the lead, the lighter the line, which works well for outlining or more controlled work. The softer the lead, the darker the line, which is great for dramatic mark-making and contrasting tonal values. Along with graphite, there

are charcoal pencils, which also work well for shading and looser lines.

Charcoal is also a good choice, as it's versatile and comes in many forms, perfect for quick, gestural drawings. It offers a wide range of grayscale from matte black to the bright white of the paper, and all the grays in between.

With digital drawing, anything you can draw with in the real world has likely been translated into digital form, so sketching on a tablet can mimic pencil, pen, charcoal, pastel, ink, paint, brush, palette knife, and aerosol spray. The most obvious benefits of drawing on a tablet are its portability and multiplicity of tools and materials that would otherwise constitute a whole art kit.

In case you wanted to know, my current personal preferences are as follows (but like your favorite songs, they tend to change over time):

Traditional Tools:

Pencils:
- Pentel .5mm/.7mm/.9mm Automatic Pencils
- Mitsubishi Hi-Uni 10B Pencils
- Prismacolor Oil-Based Colored Pencils (various)
- Generals 2B Med/4B Soft Charcoal Pencils

Pens:
- Zebra Brush Pens (Regular, Fine, Extra Fine Tip)
- Ballpoint Pens

Traditional Supports:

Paper:
- Strathmore Smooth Bristol Board
- Hahnemuhle Ingres Multicolored Drawing Paper

Digital Tools:

- Wacom Cintiq Pro 24 Creative Pen Display
- (Previously) Wacom Intuos3 9 x 12-Inch Tablet

Photograph © by Brian C Hailes
Model Taryn Lavery

WORKING FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

Drawing from secondary sources, such as photographs, can help you, as an artist, capture dramatic or dynamic poses too difficult or fleeting for a live model to hold for an extended period. Photos can also provide great reference material for memorable events, unavailable likenesses (such as those of celebrities or long-distance family members, etc.), even pets, or places you're not able to visit in person.

However, there's also a stigma attached to using photography in art due to the "flatness factor" it may cause in one's work, or its inadequacy in gaining the compelling or energetic expression or "mood" of a subject. I tend to take such blanket statements with a grain of salt, though I do agree to a certain extent.

Also, whenever possible, I like to shoot my own reference material, so as to avoid any copyright issues, and also to make the piece personal and original to myself. The process of laying out your scene, working with models, playing with lighting, and trying out different camera settings can also be an exciting and enjoyable experience in and of itself. It's a process of discovery that can begin long before you even sit down to make your first mark.

If there happen to be time, place, model or client constraints, and I am forced to use photographs as my only source material, I try to collage or 'frankenstein' several or many images together to the point they're no longer traceable or recognizeable to the original parts used. Then I begin the drawing/painting process based on this newly-constructed reference.

Be aware, however, that using multiple shots can sometimes cause inconsistencies in light sources, angles, size, and proportion, so you have to be cognizant of those problems and stay on top of the needed changes in your artwork to compensate for any discrepencies.

Working from photos can also allow you to improve the lighting of a scene, exaggerate certain elements, lose other undesired items, or even cut out negative shapes or spaces, etc. The possibilities are endless.

Artists typically have their own opinions on process, ideas, and materials and many are extremely passionate about their beliefs. Some people think that only certain colors should be used in a palette, while others are excluded. Some artists believe that there is only one approach to drawing or painting, and that approach should work for everyone. Others believe that anyone who uses a photo as reference is a hack.

Over the years, I have become a little more open to new ideas and processes than I used to be. I've learned that one approach is never right for everyone. Materials, color choices, and processes are personal decisions and are never "black and white". It's also not a good idea to be so closed-minded to processes or approaches that you miss out on opportunities that could possibly expand your world as an artist.

Yet, there there are many teachers and professors out there adamantly opposed to working with photographs when drawing or painting. Why is that?

There are a few reasons: For starters, it can hinder your development of drawing skills. When we learn to draw, we're actually learning how to see. Of course,

Photograph © by Brian C Hailes
Model Tanjie Loveny

mark-making and a knowledge of the medium that we use is important, but understanding the objects that we are drawing is paramount. We must understand these objects visually, before we can communicate them in our drawings and paintings visually. Essentially, we're taking visual information, analyzing it, and then recording it on a flat surface to create an illusion. When we draw from a photo, we're basically copying information that's already been flattened.

In other words, some of the work has already been done for us. The visual information has already been simplified into shapes, values, and lines. We still have to find and record them, but less analysis is required. This means we don't have to fully understand the light, form, or spatial relationships of the objects. This is not necessarily a bad thing because we still have to recognize what we are seeing. But if your goal is to improve your "seeing" as quickly as possible, it may

Photograph © by Brian C Hailes
Model: Taryn Lavery

"Splendor"
(from Passion & Spirit: The Dance Quote Book")
12 x 9 in.
Graphite on Bristol board

Photograph © by Brian C Hailes
Model: Nikson Woodstore

(Previous) "Ecstacy"
(from Passion & Spirit:
The Dance Quote Book")
14 x 11 in.
Graphite on Bristol board

(Opposite) "Allure"
(from Passion & Spirit:
The Dance Quote Book")
8 x 14 in.
Graphite, pen & ink on
Bristol board

(Above) "Week"
(from Dragon's Gait)
11 x 14 in.
Graphite on Bristol board

23

"Ninene, The Whitehawk"
(from Dragon's Gait)
11 x 14 in.
Graphite on Strathmore
Bristol board

"Kinara"
(from Dragon's Gait)
11 x 14 in.
Graphite on Strathmore Bristol board

Photograph © by Brian C Helm.
Model: Alison Shadows

be best to draw from life as much as possible. You may find that you don't finish many drawings, but the growth comes from analyzing and training your brain and not as a result of finishing artworks.

Reference photos can also limit you. As I've said, the best reference photos are the ones you take yourself, so you may control the light, composition, and the vantage point. Creating great reference photos is an art in itself and takes time and experience to perfect. If your reference photo is less than optimal, then you could be limiting yourself and the potential drawing or painting that you create. If you rely heavily on a photo that is not successful on its own, then the resulting drawing or painting will not likely be successful either.

Also, photos often lie. Despite what we may believe, photos don't always provide truthful information. For example, if we observe a shadow from life, we may notice a subtle warmness or coolness. We may even see a hint of a color or combination of colors. In a photo however, these subtleties may get lost or flattened. In this case, the photo isn't telling us the full story. It's not giving us all of the information we could use.

Then there's the flash. If a flash was used to take the photo, then the light within the scene is completely altered. The flash washes out the deep shadows and transitions of value, making the resulting drawing extremely flat.

So now that we've discussed a few reasons why we should avoid using photographic reference, let's now look at some reasons why we should:

Using photo references expand what we can draw and paint. There are many subjects that we simply cannot draw or paint from life—a photo is our only choice.

Photos don't move, get tired, or spoil. Figure models get tired and move. Still life arrangements eventually spoil. Unless carefully planned and controlled, the light will change throughout the day—even by the hour—producing different shadows and highlights.

Lastly, photos provide a greater level of detail and accuracy. Simply put, a camera captures details that the human eye overlooks.

At the end of the day, if you work from photos, then the art that you create should always be more interesting than the photo. The quality of the work should never be judged by how well the photo was copied.

"Alison"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black) on Strathmore Bristol board

CHOOSING MODELS & DRAWING FROM LIFE

For centuries, artists have hired models in order to draw, paint and sculpt the human form, and throughout the ages they have been celebrated for creating accurate and inspiring portrayals of the divine figure. In drawings, paintings and sculpture, the elegant proportions of the human body are recognized for their miraculous beauty, and we put great artists on pedestals for their genius, but often fail to recognize that they are putting you, me and all of humanity on a pedestal. Transcendant art works are merely attempts at immortalizing, celebrating and appreciating the miracle that is the human body.

Aristotle once wrote, "The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance."

I feel very fortunate to have worked with a wide range of models in regard to my artwork, as it can be a very rewarding experience for both artist and sitter during the creation process as well as when they see the finished product.

A so-called "muse" might also inspire creativity to go the extra distance, and make what might have been an ordinary piece into something extraordinary.

Not even the advent of photography could replace the formative exercise of rendering a person from life. Indeed, if an artist wants to learn about the subtleties of color, tone, and anatomy, there is no substitute for such direct observation.

Taking the first steps toward finding and working with a model may be an intimidating prospect, but by learning some basic etiquette, you'll navigate this time-honored relationship with ease.

To find the right model, first determine the kinds of poses you'd like to work on. For "undraped" poses (i.e. without clothing), it's best to contact arts groups that host life-drawing classes. They'll be able to recommend reliable models who will pose nude.

If you'd prefer a clothed, or "draped" model, your options are vast. Anyone you meet is a potential subject; you may even want to ask friends and acquaintances. This approach takes some courage, but you may find that people are eager to be depicted in art.

It can take some time and collaboration to find a pose that is both interesting for you to draw, and comfortable for the model to hold. Even sitting in an armchair can become uncomfortable, and an elegantly crossed leg may turn numb. To avoid such problems, evaluate the pose with your model before you begin your artwork. Simple measures such as a pillow for lumbar support or a sturdy box under a raised foot can transform a strained pose into a stable one. You'll also learn which positions can't be made comfortable through any means—something that's best discovered before the work is underway. Often, you can find the best poses by setting some broad parameters for the model and letting them experiment. For example, you could ask for a seated pose on a certain chair and leave the exact positioning up to them. The model will take a pose that's naturally comfortable for their body; if they are at ease, you are more likely to be able to make a strong work of art.

It's standard to give the model a five-minute break every 20 to 30 minutes, depending on the difficulty of the pose. Ask your model to take on the task of timing, so that you can immerse yourself in your work, without the distraction of watching a clock.

For poses that will be held for a long period of time, put down masking tape to help your model get back into the same position after breaks. Before the first break, place bits of tape on the furniture or floor beside key points, such as the side of the model's arm against the chair, and the edges of their foot. The model can then use these markers to re-assume the original pose. Despite their best efforts, it's inevitable that the model's pose will change as time passes. This is normal and you should welcome it—after all, you're depicting life, and nothing living is ever perfectly still. Embrace the change and look for the new visual interest the settled pose may reveal.

Models allow artists to stare at them with an intensity that might merit a slap in the world outside the studio. They hold poses for long, dreary hours, yet maintain alertness, all in the service of someone else's art. In turn, it's important for artists to remember that there are limits to what you can ask of models. The following rules are key to a respectful working relationship:

Other than taping, you shouldn't invade the model's personal space at all. They're in a very vulnerable position, and rearranging their hair, tweaking their clothing, or manipulating them in any way is inappropriate. Instead, describe how you would like them to move or alter their pose, and tell them once they've done it.

Also, you shouldn't photograph or video a model without permission—even if the person is fully clothed. They're being paid for a life session, not for the future use and potential distribution of their image. Some models do allow photography, but they may charge extra for the privilege. And keep spectators out of the studio: You're responsible for helping the model maintain their dignity and privacy, so only working artists should be present when they're posing.

Remember, the model has the final say on the pose: You can request one, but it's the model's right to refuse it if it's uncomfortable.

In regard to pay, local life-drawing groups can tell you the standard hourly model rate in your area. You should prepare the correct fee in advance, so your tired model won't have to wait while you search your wallet. Along with payment, make sure to give sincere thanks; the model's presence has enriched your work in a way that no inanimate subject could.

25
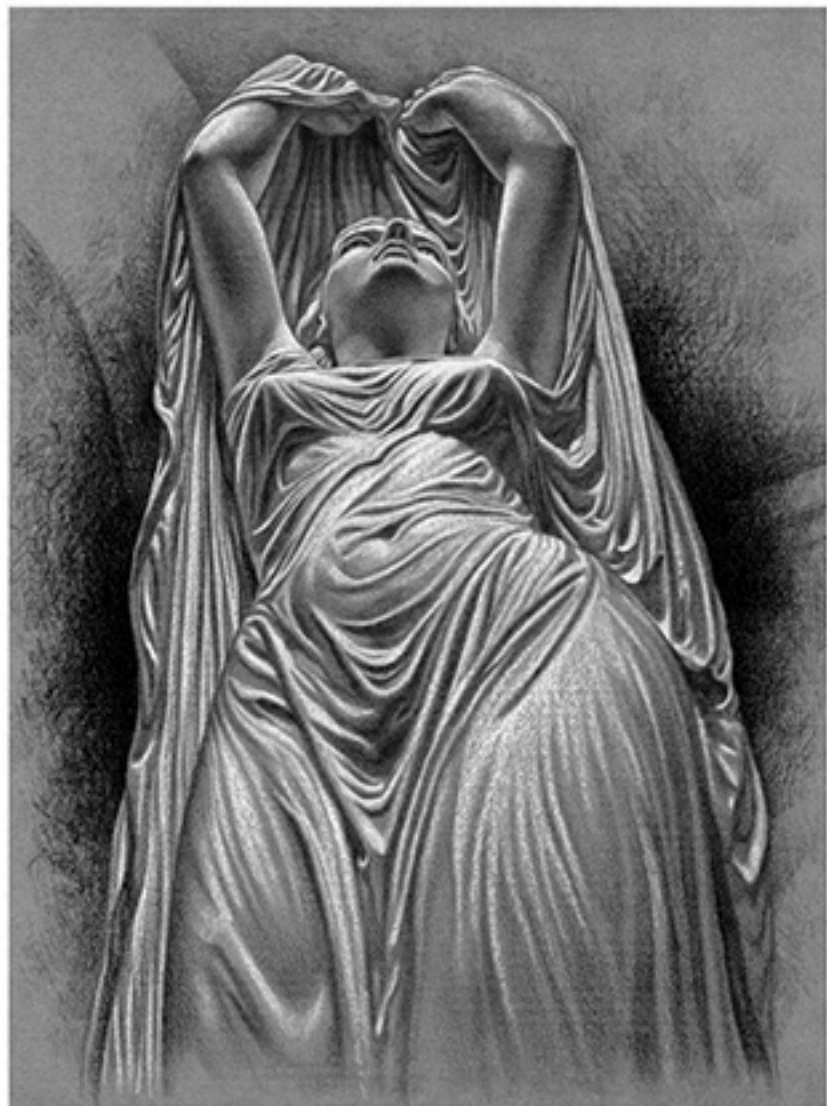
VALUE & CHIAROSCURO

Value in art is essentially how light or dark something is on a scale of white to black (with white being the highest value and black being the lowest value). It is widely considered to be one of the most important variables to the success of a drawing or painting, even more so than your selection of color (hue).

Similarly, chiaroscuro is an Italian term which literally means 'light-dark', and refers to the use of light and shadow to create the illusion of light from a specific source shining on the figures and objects in the artwork. Along with linear perspective, chiaroscuro was one of the new techniques used by painters of the Renaissance to make their pieces look truly three-dimensional. Many of the old masters realized that the contrast between areas of light and dark heighten the impact of an image, and so, the description refers to clear tonal contrasts which are often used to suggest the volume and modelling of the subjects depicted in their paintings. As the Renaissance gave way to the Baroque, a style that emphasized drama and emotional intensity, some artists developed an exaggerated form of chiaroscuro known as tenebrism, from the Italian word tenebroso, meaning gloomy or murky.

Artists who are famed for the use of chiaroscuro include Leonardo da Vinci and Caravaggio. Leonardo employed it to give a vivid impression of the three-dimensionality of his figures, and is considered an important figure in the development of chiaroscuro, especially in his later works, but he's best known for his use of a similar technique, sfumato, meaning smoky, in which the outlines of figures are softened, as if seen through a haze of smoke.

Caravaggio used such contrasts for the sake of drama. Both artists were also aware of the emotional impact of these effects. Like the filmmakers of classic Hollywood, they used the play of light and shadow to give added life and drama to their images.

As a painting technique, chiaroscuro takes advantage of the special qualities of oil paint, which is pigment suspended in linseed oil. It replaced tempera as the medium of choice for painters in Europe during the Renaissance. Tempera paint, usually made with egg yolk, was opaque and acted more like enamel. It was difficult to model figures to look three dimensional when using tempera. Unlike tempera, oil paint could be easily blended and shaded, built up in layers, or applied in translucent glazes. By applying light tones on top of dark, painters could create the effect of figures emerging from shadow.

The term chiaroscuro is also applied to drawing, but in a very specific way. A chiaroscuro drawing is made on medium-toned paper using both dark and light (usually white) lines to create the illusion of three dimensions as seen in the drawing opposite, "Study of Undine Rising From the Waters," as well as in the following pages.
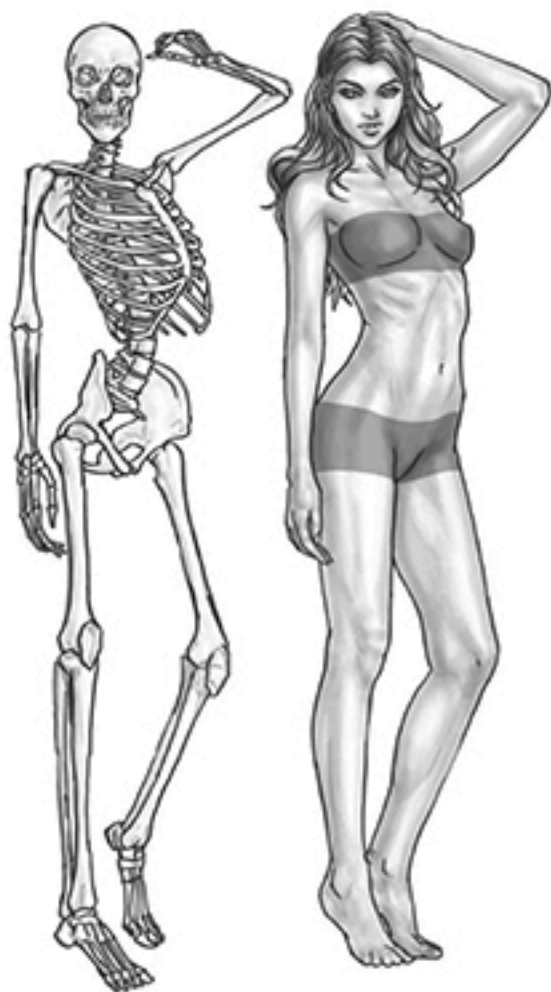
27

"Study of Modesty"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black & white) on Strathmore toned paper

"Study of
Aphrodite Bathing"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black & white) on Hahnemuhle Ingres paper

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ANATOMICAL STUDIES

"Standing Skeleton Comparison"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

33

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THE SKELETON

It should be said that many artists under-value the use of frame and manikin, but it's one of the most valuable assets you have when sketching out the figure. It is worthwhile to spend some time and thought studying it. And, as a side note, the more knowledge you gain in the study of anatomy, the more interesting it becomes.

Remember that the skeleton supports the body, acting as its underlying structure, and yet no bone is perfectly straight. Curvature in the bones has much to do with the rhythm, pose and action of the figure. It helps make your subject appear alive.

The skeleton also protects the inner organs, and provides a framework for the muscles to work against, permitting movement. The bones of the head, neck and trunk are referred to as the axial skeleton. Radiating out from the axial skeleton are the bones of the upper and lower extremities, which form the appendicular skeleton. Although the skeleton is strong, it's not quite as rigid as it appears; the spine has a rigid base in the pelvis, but it possesses great flexibility, and so do the ribs, despite being fastened firmly into the spine. All the bones are held together and upright by cartilage and muscle, and the joints operate on ball-and-socket configurations with "stops" for stability. It is also interesting to note that the whole structure collapses with the loss of consciousness.

Obviously, your underdrawings don't need to be this detailed, but it's extremely helpful to know your underlying anatomy.

Remember, that whatever dramatic pose your model is taking, under the skin there's an equally dynamic skeleton posing.

32

Bones are the foundation of the body, and mastering the human skeleton will mean you get figure drawing right every time. But if you don't know how to draw well enough to get a good gesture, no technical understanding of the joints is going to save you from awkward-looking movement. Yet when everything is in balance, anatomy is magic, and it enables you to create a human figure in any pose you want, even without reference.

"Skeleton Studies 1-6"
(L) 9 x 12 in., (R) 9 x 12 in.
Pen & ink, graphite, Prismacolor pencil (black)
on Strathmore Bristol board

35

MUSCULATURE

Learning to draw muscles may conjure medical charts in daunting details, but such complexity is usually unnecessary. We only need to know what shows up through the skin, since that's what we draw. You'd have to look hard to find someone whose body displays intense muscle detail, such as bodybuilders and extreme athletes, and only a niche of illustrators give a lot of attention to detailed musculature in their work, such as superhero comic artists. We all have a layer of fatty tissue under our skin, and this softens the look of the underlying muscles. This layer of fat is generally thicker in females than in males, as males naturally have more muscle mass. Beyond that, an individual's personal story creates infinite variation.

A muscle's job is to pull together the points to which its ends are attached. An active (contracted) muscle bulges and is hard, while an inactive (relaxed) muscle does not bulge and can be quite limp. A muscle can only pull, not push; to return to its original position it needs an opposite (antagonist) muscle to pull in the opposite direction. So most muscles in the body come in antagonistic pairs, and when one in the pair is contracted, the other is necessarily relaxed. Understanding this means that no matter what movement you draw, you'll always know the correct muscles that should be bulging. Then you won't end up with something haphazard and anatomically nonsensical.

It's also important to note that different fat and muscle ratios result in varied body types, such as "lean", "average", "heavy" or "muscular". Fat develops on top of muscle. Even a thin layer of fat will smooth over muscular definition and soften the form. Body types are not actually a matter of fat or muscle, but "how much fat?" and "how much muscle?" Using these two factors together, you can create a variety of body types for a range of characters.

In this book, there will be some examples of body type diversity, but the major focus will be on the "lean" or "athletic" figure.

In contrast to bones, muscle and fat can vary wildly from person to person and even throughout a lifetime. So the skeleton is a much more reliable foundation. Still, a basic understanding of muscular anatomy is vital for knowing where to attach muscles to the skeleton, and also helps with proportion. To master a muscle, you should study its origin, insertion, function, antagonist and form. The origin is where the muscle attaches on the more central or stationary part of the body, and the insertion is the attachment on the outer or more movable part of the body. When the muscle contracts, it pulls the insertion closer to the origin.

The most important aspect to study is the form. When you understand muscle in three dimensions (including its major planes, its changes and where it's thinnest and thickest) you'll be able to draw it from any angle, and under any lighting conditions. Understanding the muscle in three dimensions lets you do some pretty creative things.

Just try to avoid the constipated bodybuilder look; think about a muscle's form AND function to draw natural-looking figures by flexing and relaxing the muscles appropriately for a given pose.

"Musculature Studies 1-5"
9 x 12 in.
Pen & ink, graphite, on Strathmore Bristol board

35

1

2

A rudimentary knowledge of muscles is more than enough to get started, so don't get discouraged, thinking you need to have a firm grasp on the names, shape, form and function of every muscle group in the body to begin sketching the figure. This knowledge base will grow and develop naturally over time with practice and observation. Simply soak it up, here a little and there a little as you grow as an artist.

3

4

"Kneeling Stretch"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

1

2

Taking the time to draw
a highly-detailed study
of underlying muscula-
ture (2) can be helpful
and educational to add
much insight into your
mental figure drawing
repertoire, however, if
your end goal is to create
a beautiful figurative
work of art, I suggest
skipping this step, as it
can interfere with the
general beauty and flow
of naturally laying down
lines and tonal shading,
and end up creating
a more "stiff-looking"
figure (4).

3

4

"Goddess Pose Muscle Study"
9 x 12 in.
Pentel (.5mm, .7mm) mechanical pencil
on Strathmore Bristol board

37

BRIAN C HAILES

FORM

Drawing the figure is a humbling challenge that can be approached in many ways. Yet while there are as many paths to drawing the figure as there are people, three approaches seem to resonate above the rest:

- Knowledge
- Observation
- Interpretation

Approaching figure drawing from a place of knowledge means understanding how to conceptualize the major forms that make up the figure, the movements the body can make, and how to draw them convincingly, the basic proportions of the body, the skeletal anatomy of the body, and the muscular anatomy of the body and how it relates to the skeleton. This knowledge adds a logic and believability, and helps you create the illusion of three-dimensionality and solidity in your figures. You also gain the freedom to create the figure (at least partially) from your imagination and memory. While drawing from memory may not be your ultimate goal, it's an extremely useful skill, particularly when something is unclear or obscured on the model, which happens more often than you might think. When this occurs, your knowledge will allow you to "fill in the blanks" instead of being completely dependent on what you can see.

Drawing from observation can infuse our pictures with vitality and life. It gives us the opportunity to notice the unique, unpredictable moments that occur in life: the rhythms, subtle fall of light, imperfections, oddities, and specifics that add character and individuality to a model or drawing scenario. And no two scenarios are the same! Even two sittings of a model in the same pose are not identical. This is why relying purely on knowledge and memory drawing, without observation, can produce a drawing that is structurally correct, but generic, as it will lack these unique moments that must be observed and experienced.

However, relying solely on knowledge and observation without understanding what you see is like learning to pronounce a foreign language without understanding what you are saying. Interpretation in art refers to the attribution of meaning to a work. Whether the artist's intention is relevant to the interpretation of the work is a point on which people often disagree.

Form is one of the seven elements of art, which also include line, shape, value, color, texture, and space, and connotes a three-dimensional object in space.

As an Element of Art, form connotes something that is three-dimensional and encloses volume, having length, width, and height, versus shape, which is two-dimensional, or flat. A form is a shape in three dimensions, and, like shapes, can be geometric or organic.

Geometric forms are forms that are mathematical, precise, and can be named, as in the basic geometric forms: sphere, cube, pyramid, cone, and cylinder. A circle becomes a sphere in three dimensions, a square becomes a cube, a triangle becomes a pyramid or cone.

These geometric forms can be useful in simplifying the complex structures of the human figure into building blocks, and also understanding the three-dimensionality of the body.

In drawing and painting, the illusion of three-dimensional form is conveyed through the use of lighting and shadows, and the rendering of value and tone. Shape is defined by the outer contour of an object, which is how we first perceive it and begin to make sense of it, but light, value, and shadow help to give an object form and context in space so that we can fully identify it.

Organic forms are those that are free-flowing, curvy, sinewy, and are not symmetrical or easily measurable or named. They most often occur in nature, as in the shapes of flowers, branches, leaves, puddles, clouds, animals and the human figure.

"Form Studies 1-5"
12 x 9 in.
Graphite on Canson Illustration paper

Usually, the human figure will measure around 7.5 heads tall. But not always.

When creating figurative artwork, it's usually best to think in terms of forms rather than lines. Simply switching into that mindset might take your drawing to the next level, but it's easier said than done. It's about changing how you "see" not only your marks on paper or screen, but the world around you. It will force you to observe people and objects much more closely because you'll be considering what they might look like from different angles.

When drawing the basic form of the figure, the order in which I approach the varied body segments really varies depending on my mood and the pose before me, but I generally begin by constructing the torso, which can be divided into three main sections: the rib cage, abdomen and hips. It can also be helpful to keep in mind the perspective of the three-dimensional space in which your figure resides (indicated by the light reference marks in the under drawing).

Next, I'll define the head, followed by the limbs as long, tapering shapes that flow from the torso down to the fingers or toes. You might add cross-sections to indicate their position and direction of movement.

I'll then emphasize hip bones, knees and elbows, basically all the major joints and muscle groups, while still attempting to simplify as I go.

Finally, indicate the parts where muscles overlap, as this can create the illusion of more detail and bring the drawing to life.

Until the emergence of modern art, when color became its rival, form was the most important element in painting and was based above all on the human body.

When sketching out your first few lines, it's important to try and capture the energy of the pose. When working from life as shown in the examples here, you can start giving structure to that feeling-based groundwork by studying the body with a more scientific eye.

It takes many classes, lessons or sessions to cover the wonders of the human body; not only is it among the most sophisticated of animal structures in nature, it is also one with the most variations: few other species come in so many shapes and colors. Nobody, therefore, should feel frustrated for having trouble drawing people; it is an ambitious undertaking.

A well-proportioned figure, regardless of variations due to gender or such, is defined by the alignment of the joints, which is invariable (that is, we perceive something odd if it does vary). This is our groundwork for the overall form and proportions. The simplified skeleton (the basic figure or stick figure) is usually a good starting point. Then we move on to the volumes of muscle structure, and finally the details of each part of the body and face.

In treating or creating form in art the artist aims to modify natural appearances in order to make a new form that is expressive, that is, conveys some sensation or meaning in itself.

"Form Studies 6-11"
(L) 17.5 x 22.5 in. / 30.9 x 12 in.
Digital / Graphite on Bristol board

41

PROPORTION

The relationships, or ratios, between the heights, widths and depths of a subject have fascinated artists throughout the centuries. And many have taken up the challenge to depict accurate proportions of the human body while others like to accentuate or exaggerate to varying degrees.

Many artists—myself included—have tried to standardize figure drawing proportions and lay down proportional rules to follow when depicting the human form. However, observing how many systems of measuring proportions exist (or "canons" as they are called) should be our first indication of how open to interpretation bodily proportions are, and that perhaps no single proportional system can be consistently accurate.

Every canon is a search for a certain ideal of beauty. However, as the idea of beauty is so subjective, fluid and ever-changing, so have the canons been throughout history. Thus, a search for the perfect measuring system is rather pointless. There is so much variation in bodies among individuals that it is impossible for everyone to fit into any set of standards. The unique qualities of each individual are part of the challenge, complexity and fascination of depicting the figure.

However, knowledge of a few general proportions can be helpful to our drawings if we use this knowledge in combination with a sensitive observation of the model.

Today the most common unit of measurement is the head of the figure, and the figure is generally thought to be between 7.5 and 8 heads tall. The 8 head tall figure will have considerably longer legs, such as those of a runway model or heroic action figure. A more realistic figure is approximately 7.5 heads tall. But remember, these are generalizations and should not be accepted as rules.

So, during your studies of the relation of human body parts to each other and to the whole as these ratios are used in your own depictions of the figure, remember, it's okay to experiment with varying degrees of the naturalistic, idealized or stylized, which may or may not be part of an aesthetic canon within your own culture or society.

People, quite literally, come in all shapes and sizes.

So what shape and size should you draw?

Answer: Whatever inspires you!

When doling out proportions on your varied figures, you can enhance, augment, exaggerate or shrink the size of the head, limbs, breasts, or other extremities as needed to better tell your story of who these individuals are.

In the above example, notice the large head and legs with shrunken torso coupled with the aggressive pose to suggest she might be a martial artist. To the left, this buxom beauty leans forward displaying her large bosoms which calls attention to her overall sex appeal.

42

In olden times, large hips and thighs used to be a symbol of royalty, as kings, queens and nobles could afford a healthy and easy bounty on the dinner table. While lower-class peasants had to labor hard for what little food they could produce for themselves by the sweat of their own brows—indicated by thinner or more muscular frames.

Of course, in most modern societies today these types of generalities and sensibilities have shifted, but it's interesting to consider that whenever a body type is synonymous with wealth, it generally becomes the beauty standard.

Wealth today might mean eating expensive meals and not cheap junk food, being able to afford a gym (both in cost and time spent). It means not having to work in an office, but instead taking vacations to the beach whenever you want.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, right?

It's arguably subjective AND objective, or perhaps intersubjective; existing between conscious minds or shared by more than one conscious mind.

Beauty is subjective in that not everyone finds the same things attractive and that people have their own different opinions and preferences on what is beautiful. They will not always agree.

"Proportion Studies 1-7"
12 x 9 in.
Graphite on Canson Illustration paper

45

SYMMETRY

You may not have considered it before, but symmetry has the potential to make or break a drawing or painting. Symmetry in art is when the elements of a painting or drawing balance each other out. This could be the objects themselves, but it can also relate to composition, colors or other elements.

If a figure can be folded or divided into half so that the two halves match exactly then such a figure is called a symmetric figure. The dotted line in each of the two symmetric figures shown that divides the figures into two equal halves is called the line of symmetry.

Without realizing it, our brains are busy working behind the scenes to seek out symmetry when we look at any given piece of artwork. There are several reasons for this. The first is that we're hard-wired to look for it. Our ancient ancestors may not have had a name for it, but they knew that their own bodies were basically symmetrical, as were those of potential predators or prey. Therefore, this came in handy whether choosing a mate, catching dinner or avoiding being on the menu of a snarling, hungry pack of wolves!

The imaginary line straight down the middle of a figure where both sides of the divide appear more or less the same is known as bilateral symmetry.

Also notice that the turned, twisting and leaning figures shown also have a sense of balance and symmetry due to their angles and distribution on mass and value .

Before starting work on a painting or drawing, it's worth devoting some time to your composition and the symmetry of the objects placed within it. What do you want the focal point to be? How should the elements of your painting relate to each other?

Once you've worked out your composition and thought about the symmetry of the objects within it, you're going to have to consider where your light source is coming from. Research has been done into which direction of lighting people respond to best and guess what? People generally prefer paintings lit from the left. However, exceptions can be made.

Learning about composition and symmetry in art isn't difficult. It just takes practice. The more you sketch and paint, the more you'll develop an intuitive understanding of how it works.

Symmetry is often used as an aesthetic element, often to mean a kind of balance in which the corresponding parts are not necessarily alike but only similar.

Balance is an even use of elements throughout a work of art. Symmetry is a very formal type of balance consisting of a mirroring of portions of an image. Bilateral symmetry, or two-sided symmetry, is the most common, in which two halves of a work of art mirror each other.

Perfect symmetry is not necessary to create a sense of balance in an image. Asymmetrical balance is created when two sides of an image do not mirror each other, but still have approximately the same visual weight, the same amount of detail or shapes or color, and so on.

The two examples on the far right are obviously not bilaterally symmetrical, however, with their centralized weight distribution, color and the angles of their limbs, the bodies themselves being symmetrical (or they would be if posed with their feet side by side, looking straight ahead, with their arms hanging down), the bodies still feel balanced.

Besides symmetry and balance, emphasis is another artistic element to consider in your artworks. Emphasis consists of drawing attention to one or more points in a work. This can be accomplished through any of the visual elements, directing or guiding the viewer's eyes to the focal point(s) of a given piece.

"Symmetry Studies 1-6"
12 x 9 in.
Pen & ink, Prismacolor pencil (violet, dark purple, violet blue),
graphite on Canson Illustration paper

45

BRIAN C HAILES

THE HEAD

Understanding the head's basic structure is key to drawing it well from any angle. It requires looking past the details to visualize the major underlying forms in three dimensions. This simplification can also be applied to the features of the face themselves, but only after the most basic forms of the head are sketched in. There are many popular methods—such as that taught by Andrew Loomis—that use this approach, but in truth, practice and observation will be your most effective allies in mastering the mug.

If you start your drawings with a sphere, you must remember that the sides of the head are flat, so you can slice off a piece from each side of the ball. From a profile view, this plane will be a circle, but when drawing it from any other angle, it will appear as an oval due to perspective. If you divide this oval into quadrants, the vertical line represents the beginning of the jaw, which is halfway between the front of the face and the back of the head. The horizontal line represents the brow line, and the eyes intersect the halfway point between the top of the skull and chin. The top and bottom of the oval help you find the hair line and the bottom of the nose. With the basic underlying structure properly established, it becomes much easier to add the features in the right places.

And then there's style to worry about . . .
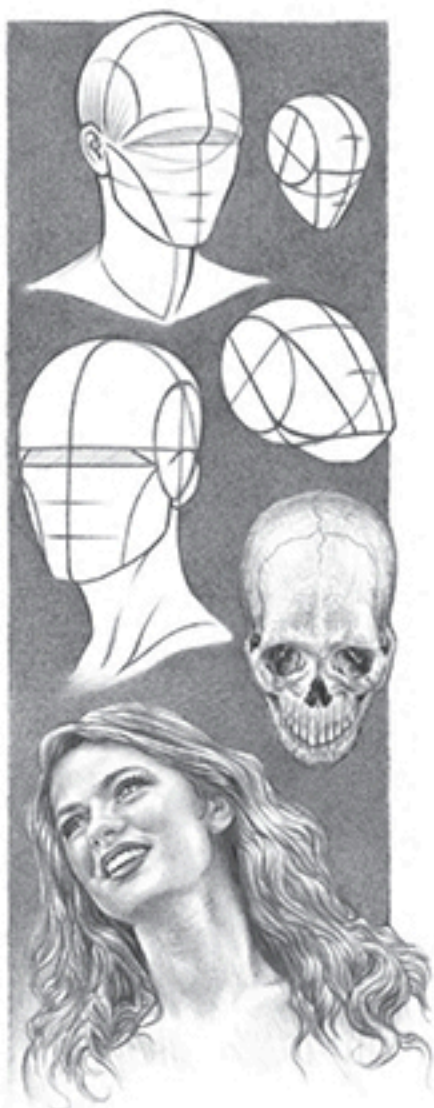
BRIAN C HAILES

THE TORSO

Complex shapes are much easier to draw if they are first simplified. With the torso, it's no different. Always begin with a shape that suggests the general feel of the torso, and pay attention to the planes or geometric shapes of the body. By knowing what directions the planes ought to face, it's easier to analyze what's wrong with a drawing, and where you might need to make some adjustments. So, identify the largest shapes and rhythms first, then add in the anatomical details.

The next 'in-between' step of linear lay-in and the final shading stage is to map out the separation between lights and shadows. In the examples shown here, I have a primary or 'key' light source coming in from the left, but there is also a subtle back or 'dramatic' light bouncing off the figures' right-facing planes. It's a soft effect, but it's there, and adds a certain extra something. As we follow this process, we can design more interesting edges and shapes to both core and cast shadows.

Certain muscles such as abs, obliques and serratus have naturally repeating forms. As you design them, intentionally bring in some variation and rhythm. Look for changes in shapes, edges, values, and sizes. And then, while shading, think about the light source and how the value halftones transition from light to dark, to core shadow, to reflected light.

BRIAN C HAILES

THE ABDOMEN

The abdomen (colloquially called the belly, tummy or midriff) is the part of the body between the thorax (chest) and pelvis. In both male and female anatomy, it's the largest cavity in the body. It is ovular in shape, the extremities of the oval being directed upward and downward. Wider above than below, it can be divided into two parts: the upper abdomen and the pelvis. Generally a larger mass in the female body than the male's, and just like the rib cage, the pelvis contributes greatly to the concept of construction of the figure. The position of the invaluable skeletal landmarks needed to position it correctly when drawing figures are shown in the nearest examples. Whilst keeping the anatomy to a bare minimum, these landmarks may assist you in working out the orientation, rotation and proportion of the pelvis in relation to other parts of the body when you figure sketch.

When sketching the abdominal portion of the figure, along with the pelvis, notice the many S-shaped curves and flowing linework that houses the body. Many artists use geometric or "blocky" lines, cubes, squares or rectangles to map out or simplify the figure, but you'll notice when drawing from life, that such straight lines rarely appear on the actual figure. Continuous line moves between contour and cross-contour in a flowing exploration of the figure. The contrast of highly realist or expressive tonal work in combination with pure contour drawing can create great visual tension.
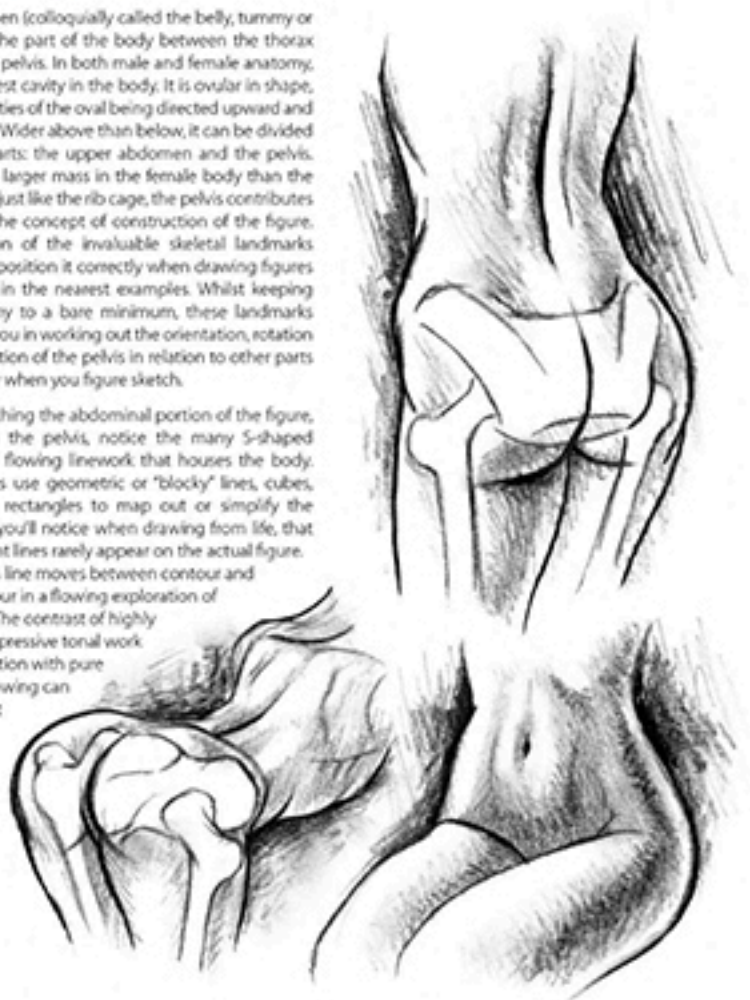
"Abdomen Studies 1-4"
12 x 9 in.
Charcoal on Bristol board

BRIAN C HAILES

THE ARMS & HANDS

An Ephraim Rubenstein once said: "If you know the anatomy of arms, you can use them to express much."

Some of the most poignant moments in the visual arts involve arms, such as Yahweh's extended arm from Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling, about to transfer the spark of life to Adam's exanimate one; or of Daphne's arms morphing into tree branches as she flees Apollo in terror in Bernini's astounding statue. Our arms are how we engage physically with the world, either to enact our will upon it or to protect ourselves from it. To use arms expressively in our figure drawing, we have to be able to draw them in a multitude of positions and from every possible angle. In order to create a convincing human figure drawing, we must first understand the structure of the arm, both inside and out. These studies show the major masses of the arm in different positions and from different angles. Remember that your knowledge of the structure of the arm is always tempered by the idiosyncrasies of foreshortening and lighting.

Hands vary individually as much as facial features; a male's hands differ from a female's, young from old, and so on. A hand can play a whole range of characters, therefore it's most useful to draw hands as if they were characters with their own personality: delicate, soft, dry, callous, uncouth, etc. Observe people's hands. First, for anatomy.
Second, for diversity.
Then, start sketching!

"Arm & Hand Studies 1-12"
12 x 9 in.
Prismacolor pencil (Indigo) on Strathmore Bristol board

55

THE LEGS & FEET

The foot may well be the most neglected part of the body, largely because it's often hidden inside some type of footwear, or simply left out of frame of a drawing—out of sight, out of mind. This unfamiliarity may well be what makes feet confusing to draw when they do come up. In reality, they have relatively simple forms and very little motion. The basic structure of the foot consists of the tarsals (or ankle bones), the metatarsi (or instep bones), and the phalanges (or toes). Also, very little of the foot can move, so its overall shape doesn't change very drastically. We can often simplify it as a wedge, and then add the toes and carve out the final form as shown in many of the examples throughout this book.

In contrast, the four bones and numerous muscles of the human leg afford a wide range of motion. The knee, hip, and ankle joints are not just hinges, swinging back and forth. They allow for twisting, circular, and side to side motions that give us the ability to run, swim, ride a bicycle, and perform other complicated tasks.

In many cultures throughout history, the leg has been used to describe a person's strength, health, or youthfulness. Today, most western cultures consider the tan, fit legs of a woman to be a symbol of youthful beauty.

In art, legs can be drawn as simple cylinders, perhaps with a bit of a taper, or much more defined in their natural, anatomical structure. Know the rules, and then let your own personal style dictate.

57

BRIAN C HAILES

GESTURAL STUDIES

"Perceptions"
9 x 12 in.
Graphite on Canson Illustration paper

GESTURAL STUDIES
SEATED POSTERIOR
STEP-BY-STEP

Digital pencil/charcoal brushes

Seated poses can sometimes look stale, so you can exaggerate the curves and proportions from what you might see in your model to breathe more life into the drawing. However, if you push it too far, you'll approach the caricature arena, so look for that balance.

I like to begin the drawing with soft, thin line work, then, once the major forms are established, moved to a bolder gesture line to accentuate the curves of the figure, adding a bit more detail with each pass. Once the contours are satisfying, I'll go in and add some tonal shadows which you'll see in the final rendering (4). With gesture drawings, the temptation is to add too much detail and over-render your piece—and I still, more often than not, succumb to this—but it's usually an enjoyable challenge to take on, knowing just when to stop. A timer sometimes helps . . . . Pencils down!

1

2

3

"Contemplation"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

"Playful"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

Whether starting, continuing or rekindling your passion for art, you might, like many, ask the question: Should I do traditional art or digital art? Some also ask, is traditional art better than digital art and vice versa. Personally, I do a mix of both and I'm always redefining my process, and will most likely continue to do so until the day I die.

So—for you beginners—what's the difference between traditional and digital art? The simple answer is traditional art uses traditional mediums that have existed and been developed and improved over the course of history. While digital art uses new digital technologies, such as software, digital pads, and styluses, to produce artwork.

As with most subjects, there are a variety of factors to consider when determining what will work best for you, including the advantages and disadvantages of using each format.

Some of the obvious advantages of going traditional include original physical artwork; an original piece of art is often considered to be worth far more than a print or digital file. Imperfection is also a consideration. The flaws of art created by hand have a unique and authentic value.

Some disadvantages of traditional art: Mistakes of hard to remove (there is no undo button). Mistakes can only be embraced or covered up. The reproduction process is more difficult and requires a scanner or digital camera. Also, regarding equipment and materials, when you run out of pencils, paint, paper or canvas, you need to go out and buy more.

"Exotic"
12 x 9 in.
Charcoal on Bristol board

"Bored"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

Some of the advantages of digital art include a higher efficiency overall. In other words, it's easier to get started and work quickly. It's also more forgiving: nothing is permanent when you can undo a step at any point. With digital, there can also be more exploration involved. Unlimited experimental possibilities. Duplication becomes easier. Plus, digital is ideal for working with clients or tight deadlines (as you don't have to wait for paint to dry to make another pass, or redo a piece from scratch to make a simple requested change). As far as equipment and materials, after you buy your computer, software, and tablet, you're pretty much set.

Digital disadvantages? Unlimited Possibilities. Limitless possibilities has been known to lead to creative paralysis. When you're finished with a piece, there's no original physical copy, only a file. It can be printed on textured paper but it's just not the same as an original drawing or painting. Digital art has also been criticized as being "too easy" (with respect to the undo button), but I believe that's a misconception. It still takes a great level of skill in the fundamentals of art to produce quality digital work.

Whether you decide to focus your efforts on traditional or digital artwork, or both, is completely up to you and no one else. However, as you continue down your own artistic path, it's important to experiment with your process and find out what works best for your style and personal goals.

"Lying Back"
12 x 9 in.
Charcoal on Bristol board

INDIAN STYLE POSTERIOR
STEP-BY-STEP

Digital pencil/paint brushes

Sometimes, the simpler the pose, the more beautiful. When starting out, it can be a challenge, but I often try to limit or simplify my line work when blocking in the overall figure. And in later steps, I'll often reduce the opacity of the under-drawing or lose it altogether. In design, more often than not, less is more (think Apple product packaging). In drawing, the same may be true (but not always).

In this piece, notice the weight distribution of the major forms of the body, slightly off balance. This can add tension despite the fact that it's otherwise a quite clean and contemplative pose. This subtle turn from exact symmetry can bring added visual interest.

Also, note the foot peaking out from behind the leg. And the arms tucked behind the torso. This can give the impression that there's more hiding out of view, creating a subtle sense of allure.

1

2

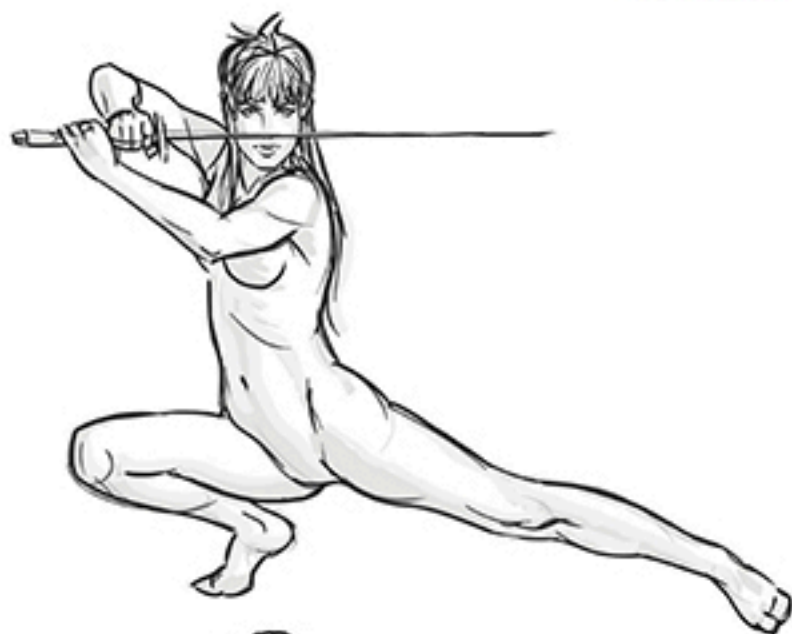
3

62

"Circumspect"
17.3 x 22.3 in.
Digital

65

"Runner"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

"Poid"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

"Adept"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

"Empty"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

GESTURAL STUDIES
ARCHERESS ANTERIOR
STEP-BY-STEP

China marker (Conté crayon) on
Strathmore Bristol board

Whether doing a gesture drawing from life or from a
photograph, I generally follow the same steps.

Try to 'take in' the image before you as a whole, and
visualize by not only seeing what's there, but 'feeling'
the contours, mood, balance and overall impression of
the pose. Is there an attitude, a confidence, a strength or
fortitude in the figure?

Notice the wide, contrapposto or "counter-poised"
stance with her shoulders and hips at contrasting angles.
Note, in fact, the utter lack of right angles. This makes it a
very interesting pose, and fun challenge to draw.

Start with the smooth, basic, sweeping gesture lines.
Then move to the smaller shapes, details, and finally a
bit of tonal value or shading to hint at the light source,
which gives the figure some dimension.

Photograph © by Brian C Hailes
Model Hillary Sukhonos

1

2

66

"Recklessness"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Grease pencil (china marker) on Bristol board

6.7

"Woman"
17.3 x 22.3 in.
Digital

68

"The Stretch"
17.3 x 22.3 in.
Digital

69

1

2

3

4

"Demure"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

Many traditional figurative artists depict stationary figures or figures captured in just one phase of movement. Even though the figure is not actually moving (as an animated figure does), it is still desirable to find a sense of movement within the pose, creating a flowing rhythm or dynamic tension throughout the forms. Finding the movement within a stationary pose gives the figure energy that can be subtle or dynamic, depending on the pose and the artist's intention.
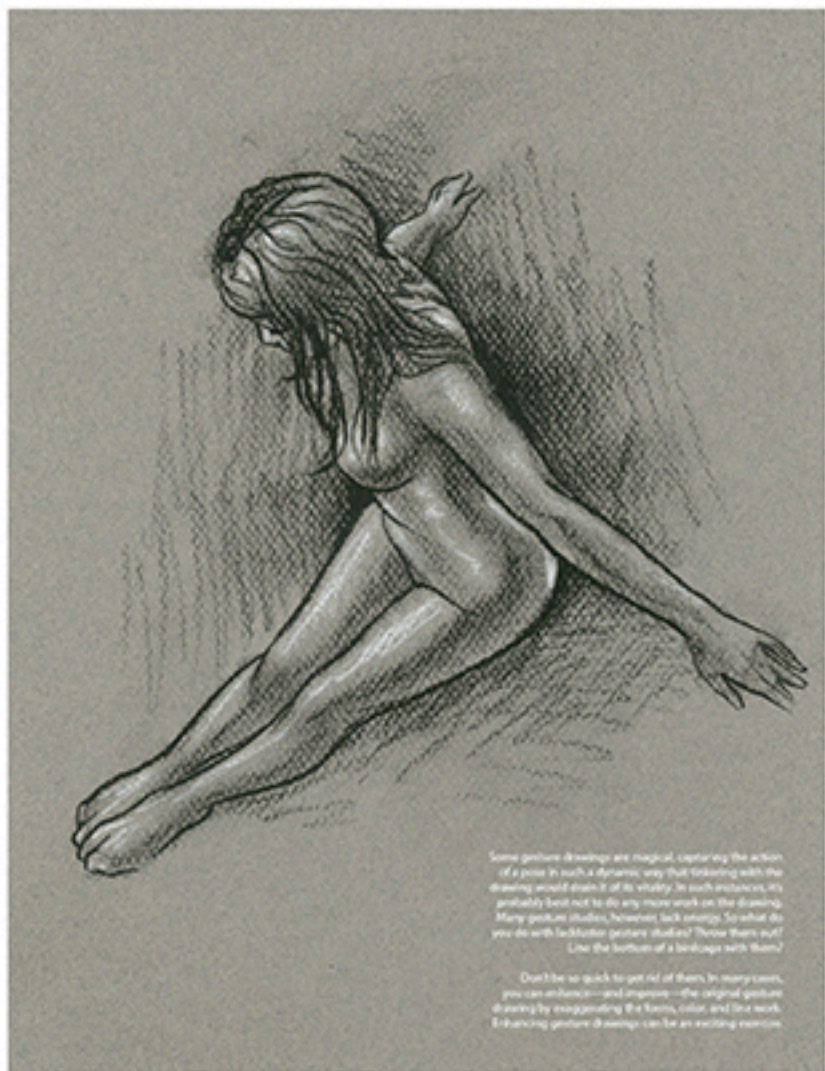
"External"
9 x 12 in.
Charcoal

"Floating I, II & III"
9 x 12 in.
Charcoal, compressed charcoal, white stick on toned pastel paper

Some gesture drawings are magical, capturing the action of a pose in such a dynamic way that tinkering with the drawing would drain it of its vitality. In such instances, it's probably best not to do any more work on the drawing. Many gesture studies, however, lack energy. So what do you do with lackluster gesture studies? Throw them out? Line the bottom of a birdcage with them?

Don't be so quick to get rid of them. In many cases, you can enhance—and improve—the original gesture drawing by exaggerating the forms, color, and line work. Enhancing gesture drawings can be an exciting exercise.

"Floating IV"
9 x 12 in.
Charcoal, compressed charcoal, white stick on toned pastel paper

VARIED DYNAMIC POSES IN GRAPHITE

Mitsu-Bishi Hi-uni 10B pencils

One of the most exhilarating ways to study the human figure is to sketch it in a rapid fashion. This process is actually known by several names—gesture drawing, action studies, warm-ups, quick studies, and croquis (pron., crow-kee). While gesture drawing is only one of countless approaches to figure drawing, many artists consider it the most expressive and spontaneous. It's enormous fun to capture a pose in just a few seconds or minutes, with only a few strokes on the paper.

Gesture drawing also helps build and maintain skill. Figurative artists across disciplines find that doing gesture studies loosens them up, keeps them in shape artistically, and sometimes triggers artistic ideas. Drawing quickly from a model is a terrific way to improve your line quality and your ability to convey dynamic movement.

There are many ways to do gesture drawings, several of which are explored in this chapter. No one method is the "right" way. Artistic experimentation calls for a variety of techniques and tools, and having an open attitude toward different methods will increase your creative possibilities. Eventually, you will find your own favorite methods and tools for drawing gestures.

"Pencil Gesture Studies 1-4"
12 x 9 in.
Mitsubishi Hi-Uni 10B pencil on Strathmore Bristol board

75

VARIED DYNAMIC POSES
IN PEN & INK

Fine/medium tip Zebra pens

We've come all this way and haven't formally defined gesture drawing yet, so let's do that now. A gesture drawing is simply a laying in of the action, form, and pose of a model or figure. Typical situations involve an artist drawing a series of poses taken by a model in a short amount of time, often as little as 10 seconds, or as long as 5-10 minutes.

Obviously, the shorter the pose, the less information you'll be able to capture. In the most primitive form, a gesture drawing could be nothing more than a couple of curved lines which indicate the gesture. For longer poses, you can start adding more detail and tone.

The purpose of gesture drawing is primarily to study human form and anatomy. It allows you to explore the way the body moves and is connected. You will start to get a feel for the contractions, joints, twists, pulls and curves demonstrated by the human body. As you do not have time to merely copy what you see, you must make quick and logical assumptions about how the body works.

"Pen & ink gesture studies 1-6"
12 x 9 in.
Pen & ink on Bristol board

BRIAN C HAILES

COMIC STUDIES

"Blink Jet Fight"
from Blink: An Illustrated Spy Thriller Novel
8 x 11 in.
Pencil

FORESHORTENED RUN
ANTERIOR STEP-BY-STEP

Digital paint brushes (Photoshop)

In comics, quite often, our characters are called upon to strike a pose—a dynamic pose. So we need to be able to draw our characters in more than just close-ups or standing around talking or doing nothing. And it's every bit as important for artists to start out with a plan as it is for writers. Rather than just sit down and stare at the blank page, brainstorm, look for reference or inspiration, sketch thumbnails or comps. Stick figures can even be helpful at this "storyboarding" stage.

Once we have a plan in place for the figure in motion—so it takes on some life—and its basic shapes and proportions sketched out (1), we add in a fluid set of lines, or "gestures" (2). See the rough drawing below start to take shape and construct the contours of the figure (this is the hard part). Once basic construction is in place, then begins the fun of fleshing her out and adding compelling detail.

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"Into the Fray"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

We won't go into a lot of detail or explanation here on the digital painting process, as this book is focused on drawing the figure, but in comics, more often than not, your penciled sketches will eventually make their way in front of a colorist, or perhaps you're wearing that hat too. So it's important to create your drawings with the entire process and end result in mind. In this case, digital Photoshop brushes covering up the detailed under-drawing almost completely (5), leaving hardly any guesswork in the final forms and color separation of the figure.

"Foreshortened Flying"
9 x 12 in.
Pentel (.5mm, .7mm) mechanical pencil on Strathmore Bristol board, digital painting

There are many and diverse methods to approach the initial frame and transition of your figures as shown here (1), and on the opposite page (1). I suggest trying out a few different approaches to see what seems to click with you. I find several popular methods quite helpful, and often find myself morphing between several different techniques depending upon my current mood.

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"Flying with Fists"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

COMIC STUDIES

STANDING ROPE PULL
LATERAL STEP-BY-STEP

Digital paint brushes (Photoshop)

For those of you that want to become comic illustrators—just as in learning any new skill—the first thing I'd suggest is to practice every day. The importance of that step cannot be emphasized enough! With dedicated practice comes a lot of repetition. As a comic illustrator, you'll frequently work with sequences and create characters or environments over and over again, so it is vital that you draw something you are passionate about.

When it comes to the penciling, whether you prefer starting on paper or digitally, the importance of sketching out your idea remains the same. Sketching creates a foundation in which all other elements fall into place—scene composition, character or subject emphasis—and ultimately determines how the story will be told. But fret not! Your sketches do not have to be perfect. Simple lines and shapes can be built upon.

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88

"Standing Rope Pull"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

Reference

Penciled

Inked &
Colored

Photograph © by Brian C Hailes
Model: Christie Hailes

"Blink Character Portrait"
Done for Blink: An Illustrated Spy Thriller Novel
11 x 16 in.
Digital

"Kneeling All Fours"
22.5 x 17.5 in.
Digital

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"Super Flying Girl"
9 x 12 in.
Pentel (.5mm, .7mm) mechanical pencil on
Strathmore Bristol board, digital painting

91

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"Flying Dance"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

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"Hanging Curve"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

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"Front Standing"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital
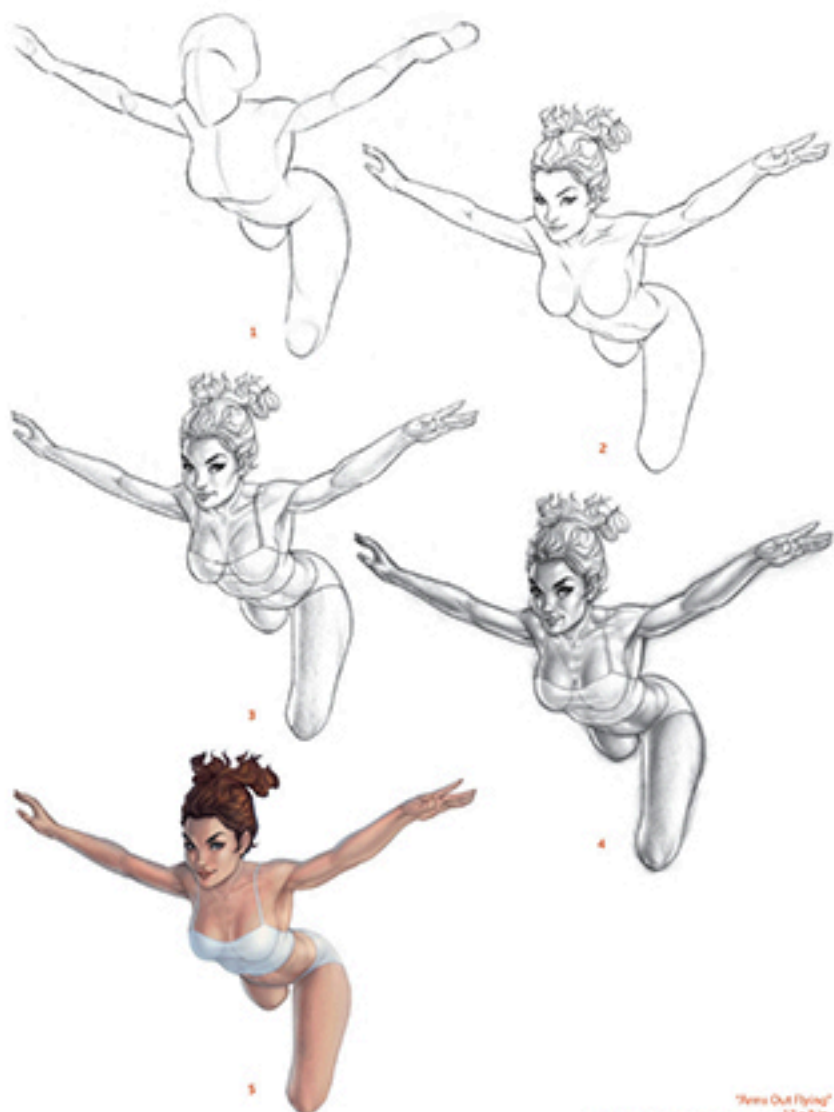
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95

CROUCHING FIGHT STANCE ANTERIOR STEP-BY-STEP

Digital paint brushes (Photoshop)

As previously mentioned, the first step in drawing your comic book heroine is to build a simplified skeleton. This is the basic structure that outlines her body and form. It also defines her position, in this case a wide-stanced, forward-leaning crouch. The skeletal structure step also ensures you get the character's figure in proportion before spending much time or adding much detail. The goal is to create a simple, clear base on which you'll build your figure.

Next comes outlining the figurative contours. Some of these lines will appear in the finished drawing, so try to keep them smooth and flowing. This figure is based on real human anatomy, but she's slightly exaggerated for dramatic effect. Take your time and draw one section at a time, following the examples. Notice how darker lines are used for the main outline of the body and thinner lines are used to define details.

Some people prefer to work on the face last while others like to do it right away. Either way, it's key to giving your heroine personality, so take your time on her profile, eyes and mouth.

Draw each muscle line in one fluid motion. Use lighter pressure at the beginning and end of each line to give them more emphasis and dimension.

THE DYNAMIC FEMALE FIGURE

Some people prefer to work on the face last while others like to do it right away. Either way, it's key to giving your heroine personality, so take your time on her profile, eyes and mouth. Also, don't neglect the hair. The hair breeds life into a figure, especially wild hair.

Draw each muscle line in one fluid motion. Use lighter pressure at the beginning and end of each line to give it more emphasis and dimension.

As you work, erase or lighten the opacity of underlying layers of unnecessary skeleton lines. If you're going to transfer your character onto another support for inking/coloring, it's okay to leave some of them; if progressing from pencil to ink, you can save the nice, clean lines for the inker to worry about, leaving some of the sketch marks visible in the initial penciled stage. After all, there's something quite charming about the haphazard marks of an original sketch.

"Crouching Fight Stance"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

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"Side Seated"
22.5 x 17.5 in.
Digital

"Ball Crouch"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

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"Poised Crouch"
17.3 x 22.3 in.
Digital

1

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I'm not going to go into any great detail about perspective in this volume, but suffice it to say that it is something you should be using and thinking about as you draw the figure. Much of this comes inherently, as we can all tell when something seems "off" in an image where it has been used incorrectly.

We're all probably familiar with linear perspective, a drawing method that utilizes lines to create the illusion of space on a flat, 2-D surface. There are three forms of linear perspective including one-point perspective, two-point perspective, and three-point perspective. Each form is selected and implemented by the artist based on the point of view of the viewer.

While linear perspective is mostly used for drawing buildings, trees, roads, etc. in a landscape, we can apply its principles to drawing the human figure in perspective.

Linear perspective helps the artist to better understand how we perceive objects in three-dimensional space and communicate that information in a drawing. It does this by structuring the distortion that happens when we draw objects in space.

"Flying and Lifting"
17.3 x 22.3 in.
Digital

3

4

As you work to break down all the major components that comprise the superhero, observe, play and practice with proportions, anatomy, suit/costume design, foreshortening, rendering, perspective, and how to draw dynamic poses from your imagination. All of these factors will influence the final product and help you improve. In these types of action poses, it's essential to create powerful characters that leap off the page and tell an amazing story!

Regular practice is the best way to improve your ability to draw a variety of characters effectively. As you have seen, the techniques (and media) shown throughout this book can apply to all sorts of art styles from comics to fine art and everything in between.

"Cam's Flying Kick"
12 x 9 in.
Graphite, Prismacolor pencil (black, white, indigo, cool grey)
on Strathmore toned paper

Photograph © by Brian C Hailes
Model: Hillary Sab'svrenkc

When illustrating the character Blink from the Illustrated Spy Thriller Novel of the same name, I shot reference of models wearing a certified olympic diving suit because I liked the placement of the stitch lines across the body and ultimately used these as reference points to craft her high-tech carbon fiber suit of body armor across multiple illustrations throughout the book.

Always have such things in mind during the 'pre-production' stage of a project—anything to lighten your load or make the journey ahead easier, faster, and more efficient, because in the comic industry, to make decent money, you've got to work quickly. Time, as they say, is money.

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"Blink Side Fire"
12 x 9 in.
Pen & ink, graphite

"Jumper"
From Blink: An Illustrated Spy Thriller Novel
8 x 11 in.
Graphite on Bristol Board

"The Warehouse"
From Blink: An Illustrated Spy Thriller Novel
8 x 11 in.
Graphite on Bristol Board

Photography © by Brian C Hailes
Models: (Top left) Christie Hailes
(Bottom left) Sarah Manning
(Right) Mary Sukhonos

104

"Sky Drop"
From Blink: An Illustrated Spy Thriller Novel
8 x 11 in.
Graphite on Bristol Board

"Chopper Down"
From Blink: An Illustrated Spy Thriller Novel
8 x 11 in.
Graphite on Bristol Board

BRIAN C HAILES

ANIME STUDIES

"Tangerine Dream"
9 x 12 in.
Graphite, Prismacolor pencil on Strathmore Bristol board

POISED WITH RAISED FIST LATERAL STEP-BY STEP

Digital paint brushes (Photoshop)

Anime is a style of animation/drawing originating from Japan. Most anime drawings include exaggerated physical features such as large eyes, big hair and elongated limbs. In the forthcoming examples, as in previous sections, we'll take a look at the female figure in active, dramatic poses, and varying media, but with the Japanese-style flare of anime.

As you can see from the progression here (1–4), the process is extremely similar to that of comics, and even gestural sketches. It always works best to flesh out the larger, foundational shapes of the figure before moving in to articulate the details, even in a highly stylized illustration.

Note the larger head and eyes, long arms and legs, and the tiny, simplified nose and mouth. These characteristics coupled with more subtle hints, like the spiky hair, and delicate hands and feet immediately read to most as anime.

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"Poised with Raised Fist"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

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"Seated Stretch"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

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113

KICKING THREE-QUARTER STEP-BY-STEP

Digital paint brushes (Photoshop)

(1) Sketch a rough wireframe of a young girl as shown in the example at right. Draw a larger head to represent a child's proportion.

(2) Sketch additional shapes, to build up the body. Sketch the figure, using the below shapes as a guide.

(3) Add details. These include hair, clothes, and accessories. This is also a good stage to start refining the contours of the artwork, using small-tipped drawing tools for fine details, such as muscle definition, and thicker tips for the outlines, and to accent the larger or shadow-side shapes.

(4) Continue to refine and draw over the initial reference lines. Erase and/or remove any unnecessary under-drawing marks.

At this point, you might decide to add color, or not, depending what it's for.

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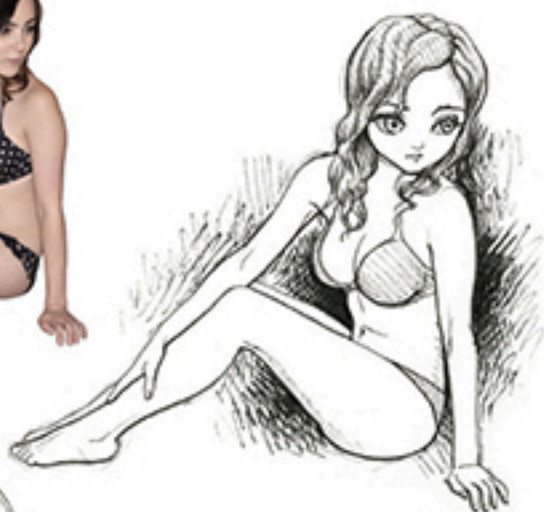
"Casual Interest"
9 x 12 in.
Pen & ink on Bristol board

"Healer"
9 x 12 in.
Pen & ink on Bristol board

Photographs © by Brian C Hailes
Models (Top left) Sarah Manning
(Bottom left) Jill Vawser
(Top right) Sarah Manning
(Bottom right) Sarah Crawley

"Torso"
9 x 12 in.
Pen & ink on Bristol board

"Lounging"
9 x 12 in.
Pen & ink on Bristol board

RUNNING LATERAL STEP-BY-STEP

Digital paint brushes (Photoshop)

As with most of the other step-by-step examples throughout this book, you can see that I almost always begin by drawing a rough overall shape or pose of the body (1). One of the most important things to keep in mind when drawing the full figure is the proportions or the relation of one body part to another. Everything has to be the right size or your character will look odd.

Certain styles may deliberately exaggerate certain proportions (the big anime eyes for example), but there are still rules to follow when drawing. Cleaning up your lines after you have established the basic shape of the body and adding in smaller details such as the hair, facial features, neck lines, collar bones and the hint of the knees and leg muscles, etc. (2) as well as adding any clothing (3) usually takes up the second and third steps. Additional fine-tuning and laying in of tonal values ought to finish her up (4).

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"Running"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

117

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"Youth Jumping"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

"Leap Punch"
9 x 12 in.
Graphite on Pastel paper

"Free"
9 x 12 in.
Graphite on Pastel paper

"Ready"
12 x 9 in.
Graphite on Pastel paper

"Light on Her Feet"
12 x 9 in.
Graphite on Pastel paper

RESTING HANDS ON KNEES ANTERIOR STEP-BY-STEP

Digital paint brushes (Photoshop)

Learning how to draw bodies is all about troubleshooting. No one gets it right the first time and when you get it wrong, you know. No worries. You can adjust immediately and keep progressing. More importantly, the fixes are straightforward. You can observe the planes of the body and skeletal landmarks in others, figurines, mannekins and even in yourself. Then use this knowledge to relate to what you're seeing with a model.

When you move from gesture drawing to comic style figures and then on to very specific looks such as anime, the approach is still very similar. You'll still need to learn and practice the planes, proportions and landmarks of the body as though you were working from a live model in a life drawing class. The foundational principles remain the same.

The best way to start "seeing" is by doing.

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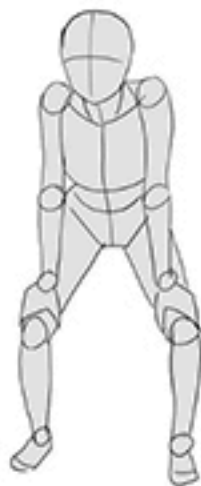
"Resting Hands on Knees"
17.3 x 22.3 in.
Digital

"Anticipation"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (dark brown, white) on Hahnemuhle Ingres toned paper

"Reclined"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (dark purple, white) on Hahnemühle Ingres toned paper

125

SEATED CROUCH LATERAL STEP-BY-STEP

Digital paint brushes (Photoshop)

To improve as a manga or anime artist, it's probably best to avoid shortcuts, such as only attempting to draw bust up pictures and hiding the hands or fingers. If you have a difficult time drawing good hands, keep practicing. It's too easy to hide them or just draw your characters from the waist up. It's better to draw terrible hands while continuing to improve than to give up. With practice, you'll get better, so don't sweat it.

It's also a good idea to be open to criticism. This is tough advice to follow because criticism can feel like a scolding, especially criticism phrased in an impolite way. You don't have to accept every critique as legitimate, but you do need to keep an open mind. The critic may have valid points to consider.

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124

"Seated Crouch"
17.5 x 22.5 in.
Digital

(Top) "Taryn" / (Bottom) "Becky" 9 x 12 in. Prismacolor pencil (indigo, white / dark brown, white) on Hahnemuhle Ingres toned paper

(Top) "Shelly" / (Bottom) "Tawna" 9 x 12 in. Prismacolor pencil (dark purple, white / Tuscan red, white) on Hahnemuhle Ingres toned paper

ANIME STUDIES

MISS ANIME FISTS OUT THREE-QUARTER STEP-BY-STEP

Mitsu-Bishi Hi-uni 10B pencils

As you have probably noticed, finding the form of the figure through contour line work is my go-to for primarily cartoon, comic, anime and manga characters. Discovering the form through shapes, shading, or value/chiaroscuro, I generally reserve for life or realistic depictions of the figure in space. I believe it has something to do with setting up the image for its pre-visualized end result.

In performing these focused exercises in the anime/manga styles, I've come to realize that the primary, and in some cases, the only difference, lies solely within the head of the figure—at least, when compared to comic or other related styles of figure drawing. This being the case, it makes it easy to find models to draw from. Anyone will do. Personally, I find that friends and family are generally happy to strike a pose for an artwork. Then, keep practicing from found reference for the big head, large eyed, tiny nose and mouth exaggerations which stand paramount in the signature anime drawing styles.
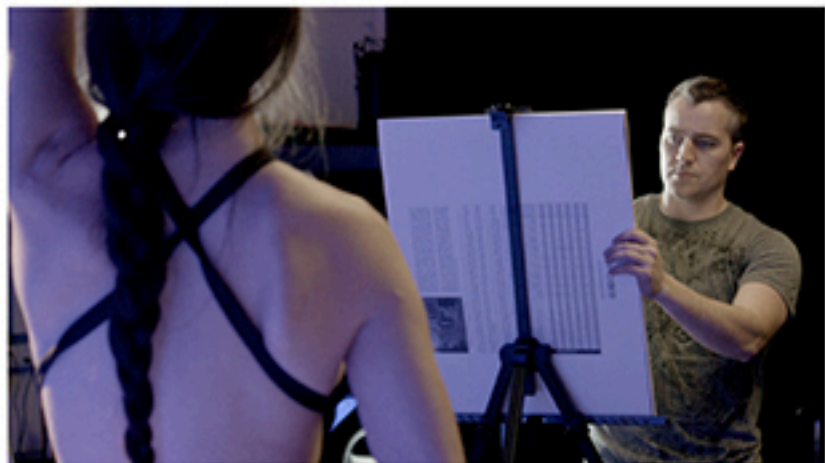

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129

FINE ART & LIFE STUDIES

"Recumbent"
12 x 9 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black, white) on Canson Mi-Teintes Pastel toned paper

BRIAN C HAILES

5-30 Minute Warm-Up Poses

Learning to draw takes hard work and practice—and there's no better way to practice than to draw directly from the figure. These short poses were done in 5, 10, 15, or 30 minute modeling sessions. Quick poses like these can loosen you up and give the model a chance to warm up as well. The key is to get a feeling of action and movement. The model may stand, sit, twist, recline or have an arm stretched out. Don't be too concerned with registering a lot of detail—As you can see, I'm still working on this—as short poses are simply exercises to help you see the model as a whole figure.

5 Minutes

10 Minutes

15 Minutes

30 Minutes

POSED THREE-QUARTER STEP-BY-STEP

Prismacolor pencil (black, white, sepia, dark brown, gold, burnt sienna) on Hahnemühle Ingres toned paper

As an artist, you want to be able to understand what you're seeing and to be able to simplify the complex form into clear structure. There is a lot of important information hidden under the skin, and there are universal landmarks on each human body. These landmarks occur at fixed skeletal points where bone is close to the surface. Keep these in mind and learning how to draw bodies becomes that much more doable.

Identifying these bony landmarks, or the spots where bones come closest to the surface to let you know the structure underneath the form can be tricky and exhausting. After all, anatomical study and learning the names of thousands of skeletal and muscular body parts can take decades to memorize and truly understand. Instead, what I'm suggesting is to always be consciously observing.

"Jessica"
9 x 12 in.
Graphite, Prismacolor pencil on Hahnemuhle Ingres toned paper

(Top) "Light as a Feather"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (dark purple, white) on Hahnemühle Ingres toned paper

BRIAN C HAILES

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4

"Renaissance Girl"
9 x 12 in.
Graphite

FIGHT STANCE ANTERIOR
STEP-BY-STEP

Graphite, Prismacolor pencil (black, white, burnt sienna, dark brown, sepia) on Hahnemuhle Ingres paper

It's important to cultivate a habit of analyzing the form of a figure, to not only see form, but to study the individual elements of the shadows and highlights as they fall across it. Understanding the principles of chiaroscuro, for example, can be the primary difference in the quality and precision of your work. It suggests how much care you have taken to accurately record what you see in terms of the anatomy of the shadows and highlights.

You might attempt—like in the below examples—to capture the subject first with line, and then add general value in later steps. And doing so may yield a decent image. But if you subsequently take the time to truly analyze the shapes and edges of your shadows and highlights, intuitively understanding the form created by them, you will more easily achieve a convincing likeness.

Photograph © by Brian C Hailes
Model: Lexi Molina

"Low Fight Stance"
9 x 12 in.
Graphite, Prismacolor pencil on Hahnemuhle Ingres toned paper

BRIAN C HAILES

Drawing From Live Models

A life drawing class can make an ideal environment for practicing quick, linear mark-making as well as careful, intentional contour lines and tonal values. Most sessions begin with short or quick poses followed by some longer ones. These drawings were made from a diverse group of models in varying dynamic poses, each around 30-45 minute periods.

While sketching from life, I like to practice varying my line width by adjusting the amount of pressure I use on my pencil or charcoal stick. A line that varies in weight along its length can be employed to suggest certain energy and movement. Light marks at an early stage can be easily erased or worked over, while a dark, heavy line can root a drawing to the page.
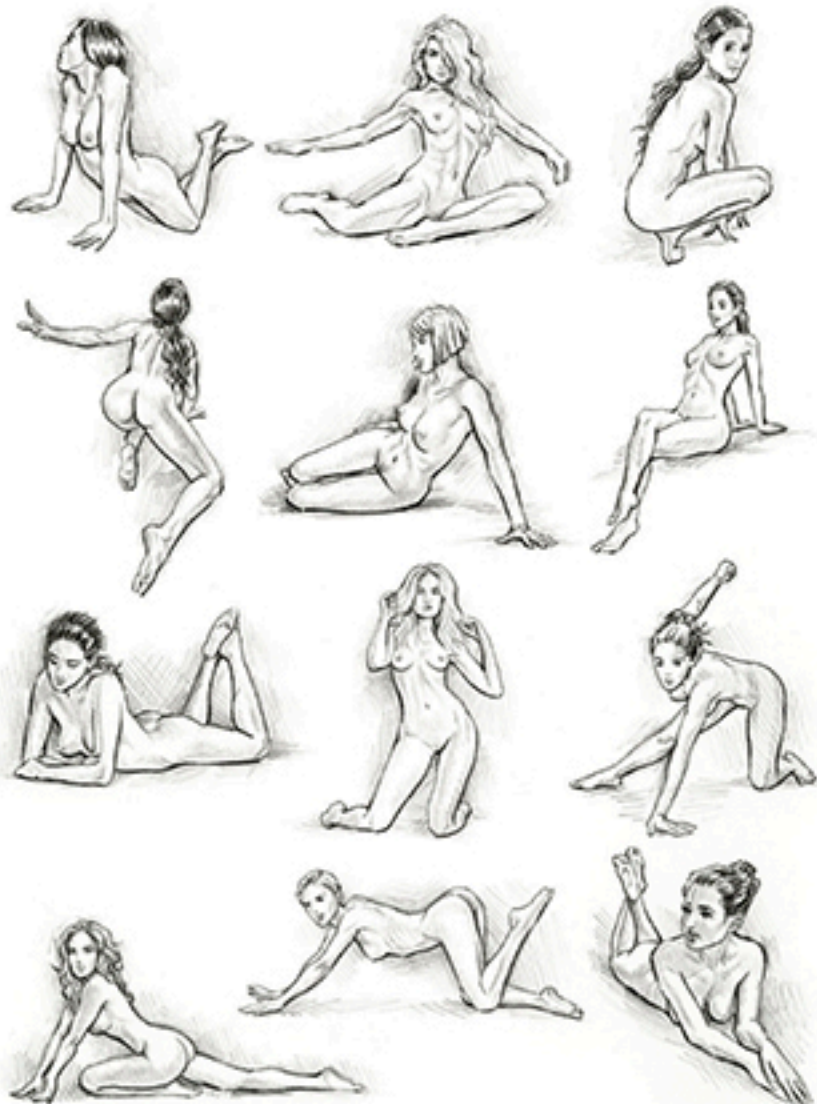
"Supine Figure"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black, white) on Canson Mi-Teintes Pastel toned paper

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"Persuasion"
22 x 17 in.
Digital

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"Hannah on the Rocks"
9 x 12 in.
Graphite on
Strathmore Bristol board

2

"Lauren"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black) on
Strathmore Bristol board   149

BRIAN C HAILES

"Life Studies"
Varied sizes
Charcoal, graphite, ink on varied supports

150

"The Fairy Godmother Within"
9 x 12 in.
Graphite on Strathmore Bristol board

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"Sitting on the Beach"
9 x 12 in.
Pastel (.5mm, .7mm) mechanical pencil on
Strathmore Bristol board, digital painting

Photograph © by Brian C Apato
Model: Meagan Chadwick

"Meagan's World"
12 x 9 in.
Prismacolor pencil on Canson Mi-Teintes Pastel toned paper

155

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"Gentle Assurance"
12 x 9 in.
Pentel mechanical pencil (.5mm, .7mm, .9mm) on Strathmore Bristol board

STANDING CONTEMPLATIVE
THREE-QUARTER STEP-BY-STEP

Pentel mechanical pencil (.5mm, .7mm, .9mm)
on Strathmore Bristol board

With standing figures, see that either head or shoulders
are turned or tipped, or both; variety in a standing pose is
the name of the game. As illustrated here, you'll notice the
figure's weight is mainly on one foot, giving the figure a
contrapposto, or asymmetrical arrangement. This is usually
more visually interesting to look at than a static, flat, or even
pose. Always be mindful in observing the distributed weight
of your figures. This will help in understanding your model as
a living, breathing, three-dimensional creature with bones,
muscle, and mass reacting appropraiately with gravity, even
if that relationship seems subtle.

Also, keep in mind that shadow defines form. Sketch the
shapes of light, shadow and halftone areas as carefully as
contours, Then, fill in those shapes with the right tones, and
the form will take care of itself.

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"Refined"
9 x 12 in.
Pentel mechanical pencil (.5mm, .7mm, .9mm)
on Strathmore Bristol board   159

"Simple Grace"
12 x 9 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black) on Strathmore charcoal paper

"Sarah Sleeps"
12 x 9 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black, white) on Strathmore pastel toned paper

"Playful Spirit"
12 x 9 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black) on Strathmore toned paper

"Sensuous Landscape"
12 x 9 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black) on Strathmore charcoal paper

BRIAN C HAILES

THE
EXPRESSIVE FACTOR

"Fighting Spirit"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black, white, indigo, cool gray, warm grey, silver) on Strathmore toned paper

163

BRIAN C HAILES

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Varied action sketches
Varied sizes
Charcoal on Strathmore Bristol board

165

BRIAN C HAILES

"The Climber"
9 x 12 in.
Pentel mechanical pencil
(.5mm, .7mm, .9mm) on Strathmore Bristol board

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"Over and Through"
9 x 12 in.
Pentel mechanical pencil (.5mm, .7mm, .9mm)
on Strathmore Bristol board

Photographs © by Brian C Hailes
Model: Hillary Sotthewes

"Quiet Humility"
9 x 12 in.
Pen & ink, graphite on Strathmore Bristol board

"Splayed Out Front Crouch"
12 x 9 in.
Pen & ink, graphite on Canson Mi-Teintes Pastel paper

(Left) "With Regard"
12 x 9 in.
Prismacolor pencil (indigo, white) on Canson Mi-Teintes Pastel toned paper

"Zoe Ballerina"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil on Hahnemühle Ingres paper

"Persuasive Vulnerability"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black) on Hahnemuhle Ingres toned paper

"Dark Shrine"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black) on Strathmore Bristol board

BALLET LEAP THREE-QUARTER STEP-BY-STEP

Pentel mechanical pencil (.5mm, .7mm, .9mm) on Strathmore Bristol board

A feeling of rhythm is of utmost importance in figure drawing, and it's also one of the easiest aspects to miss. Just as we feel tempo and rhythm in music, so too we must find it in drawing the figure. The flow of continuous lines and shadows ought to result in a strong sense of grace and unity. The rhythmic emphasis on a line or contour is called 'picking up', and this edge, observed across the form will be picked up and continued along another contour. The phenomenon of beautiful rhythmic line can be found throughout all natural forms. Some basic lines of rhythm include: 1) the "Hogarth" line that curves in one direction, then reverses on itself; 2) a spiral, or swinging, circular line; 3) a parabola, a sweep of line continually bending to a greater curve. Rhythm may be forceful or gentle and flowing, or streamlined for a sense of swift motion.

This rhythm that pulses through the universe suggests flow, repetition, motion, cycles, and waves, all of which are related to a unified plan or purpose. You will find the average subject full of rhythm if you look for it.

1

2

3

4

BRIAN C HAILES

Photographs © by Brian C Hailes
Model Taryn Lovley

"Arabian Princess"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (Tuscan red) on Hahnemühle Ingres paper

"Seated Arabian"
9 x 12 in.
Prismacolor pencil (Tuscan red) on Canson Mi-Teintes Pastel toned paper

1

2

"Glancing Up"
9 x 12 in.
Pentel mechanical pencil (.5mm, .7mm, .9mm) on Strathmore Bristol board

3

3

"Girl Walking"
9 x 12 in.
Mitsubishi Hi-Uni 10B pencil on Canson Mi-Teintes pastel paper

Photograph © by Brian C Hailes
Model: Alison Meadows

"Focused Agression", 9 x 12 in., Prismacolor pencil (black, white, gold, sepia, burnt umber, raw sienna) on Canson Pastel toned paper

"Allison Fairy Study", 9 x 12 in., Prismacolor pencil (black, white, indigo, cool grey, warm grey, silver) on Canson pastel toned paper

"Capricious", 9 x 12 in., Prismacolor pencil (black, white, gold, sepia, burnt umber, raw sienna) on Canson Pastel toned paper

IN CONCLUSION

"To Be Human"
12 x 9 in.
Prismacolor pencil (black, white) on Canson Mi-Tientes Pastel toned paper

Many consider figure drawing to be the holy grail of representational art. And why not? We *are* figures, so it's only natural that we're drawn to use the figure to explore the many facets of our human condition.

Life drawing is taught to many budding artists as an introduction into the world of art, even artists that don't primarily want to specialize in the human form, because the human body is a complex object which allows an artist to learn about a variety of essential techniques. Observing and interpreting the shape of the human body trains an artist to see almost every form of curve, line, and subtle undulation found in nature.

Just as a musician, dancer or athlete must practice and train to maintain a level of excellence, drawing the figure from life on a regular basis keeps an artist in good form. Life drawing is like calisthenics for the artist. Moreover, attending sessions regularly affords an excellent means to develop a better work ethic. Just as one is more apt to continue an exercise program with companions, drawing in the company of a group provides an incentive to keep practicing. There is no overstating the value of a regimen that keeps one in the activity of drawing, circumventing any number of distractions at home or simply overcoming a case of artist's block. Michelangelo wrote in one of his many sketchbooks: "There is no greater harm than that of time wasted. Draw Antonio, draw Antonio, draw and do not waste time."

Also, there is something very liberating and peaceful about life-drawing. Like in a meditation, you are in the moment, without thoughts, lost in time. It's all about the process, and there is another pose coming, so relax, and keep practicing . . . regularly, consistently, and you will see improvement in your craft.

Lastly, as fascinating as the study of figure drawing is in itself, it can be even more engaging, both for you and your audience, when it also becomes a study of yourself and the world around you.
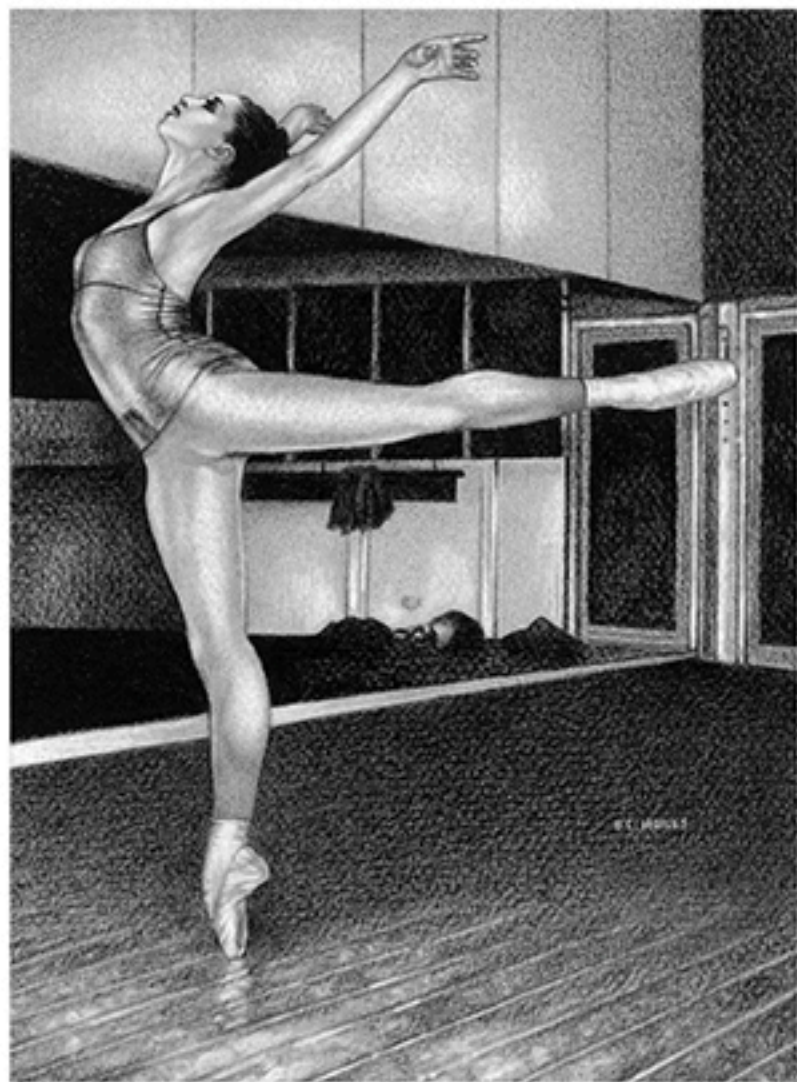
PORTFOLIO

"Elegance"
8 x 11in.
Graphite on Bristol board

145

"Life"
8 × 11 in.
Graphite, pen & ink on Bristol board

"Delicate"
8.5 x 11 in.
Prismacolor pencil on Pastel-toned paper

"Practice"
8 x 11 in.
Graphite on Bristol board

"Hula"
12 x 8 in.
Graphite, pen & ink on Bristol board

"Theater"
15 x 8.5 in.
Graphite on Bristol board

"Resting"
48 x 24 in.
Digital

"Blink: Inside the Apartment"
8 x 11 in.
Graphite on Bristol board

"Blink Over Barcelona"
8 x 11 in.
Graphite on Bristol board, digital

195

"Blink Surfs"
8 x 11 in.
Graphite on Bristol board

"Blink, Behind the Curtain"
18.38 x 24 in.
Graphite on Bristol board, digital

"Dragon Dance"
24 x 18 in.
Pen & ink, digital

199

"Emergence"
30 x 36 in.
Oils

"Liberty Dragon"
18 x 24 in.
Pen & ink, digital

"The Dynamic Female Figure" (Preliminary cover concept)
39 x 25 in.
Graphite on Bristol board, digital

203

A SPECIAL THANKS

To the Models & Other Contributors:

Contributors:
Patrick K Hill
(Editor)
Christie Hailes
(Bookkeeper / Moral Support)
Vincentius Matthew
(Colorist)
Joshua Oman
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(Model Session Host)
Kraig Varner
(Model Session Host)
RT
(Model Session Host)

Dancers/Models:
Artists of Ballet West
Artists of Cache Valley Civic Ballet
Artists of Central West Ballet
Artists of Ballet Centre
Artists of Ballroom Utah

Models:
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Arielle Miller
Blake
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Megan Golden
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Polina Chernenko
Rebecca Erickson
Reese Riley
Ruth
Sarah Crowley
Sarah Manning
Shelly Brown Monsen
Taryn Lavery
Tawna Le Ward

Other Titles by Brian C Hailes

Illustrated Novels
- Blink: An Illustrated Spy Thriller Novel
- Avila (Available 2021!)
- Defender of Llyans (Available 2021!)
- McKenna (American Girl)
- McKenna, Ready to Fly (American Girl)
- Grace & Sylvie: Recipe For Family (American Girl)

Graphic Novels / Comics
- Devil's Triangle: The Complete Graphic Novel
- Dragon's Gait
- KamiKazi
- Continuum (Arcana Comics)

Childrens Picture Books
- If I Were a Spaceman: A Rhyming Adventure Through the Cosmos
- Here, There Be Monsters
- Don't Go Near the Crocodile Ponds
- Skeleton Play

Anthologies
- Cresting the Sun: A Sci-fi / Fantasy Anthology Featuring 12 Award-Winning Short Stories
- Heroic: Tales of the Extraordinary

Non-Fiction
- Passion & Spirit: The Dance Quote Book with Artwork by B.C. Hailes

About the Author/Artist

Born at the base of the beautiful Wasatch Mountains, Brian began exploring and sketching the world—as most children do—at a very early age. He continued to pursue not only his artistic path through traditional schooling, higher education, and endless hours of practice, but also his love of storytelling. Utilizing his natural illustrative and creative design sense, he began writing and illustrating his own books through his teens and on into adulthood.

Intrigued by the Science Fiction and Fantasy genres, many of Hailes' projects reflect elements of the fantastic, but he also appreciates the beauty and elegance in fine art masterpieces by the likes of Bouguereau, Waterhouse, Alma-Tadema, and many others. He also feels a certain draw to the styles and ideals of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood of the mid-nineteenth century.

Hailes studied illustration and graphic design at Utah State University where he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, as well as the Academy of Art University in San Francisco.

Having received several awards for his art from across the country, including Winner of the L. Ron Hubbard Illustrators of the Future contest out of Hollywood, his artwork has also been featured in the 2017-2020 editions of Infected By Art.

While continually pursuing progress and improvement by way of technique and application in his own works, he also keeps busy with design and commission work for a diverse clientele, including book covers, magazine illustration, corporate design as well as private commissions.

Hailes currently lives in Salt Lake City with his wife and four boys, where he continues to write, paint and draw regularly.

His work can be purchased at HailesArt.com

Other Titles Available from
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Illustrated Novels

**Blink: An Illustrated
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Heather Edwards
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